SKYWORDS

December 2021

Chairman's Chat

After nearly 5 hours in the air, the sun lost its strength, the thermals mellowed, and gravity finally got the better of us. Keen for a shared retrieve, I dutifully followed my fellow pilot into a large meadow. With plenty of height we'd both carefully avoided the obvious horse enclosures. Admittedly there was a herd of cows at the far end of the field several hundred metres away, but they didn't seem at all bothered. Indeed, curiosity quickly got the better of them and they wandered across to see if 4 stomachs was enough to digest a paraglider.

Unfortunately, we also attracted the unwelcome attention of 2 angry young('ish) farmers who came racing across the field in their 4x4. My colleague got the brunt of the initial exchange which was along the lines of 'you can't land here', with the response 'oh yes I can'. By the time I entered the foray the exchange had degenerated into a swearing match, with my colleague refusing to give his name, and a very real prospect of the police being called.

By complete coincidence, in my role as BHPA Sites Officer, I have recently been involved in drafting a Code of Conduct with the National Farmers Union. Initially, by way of a template, they presented us with an agreement that they have with the British Balloon Association. This contained some rather scary conditions including the mandatory reporting of each out-landing to the landowner, and a set fee in every case. Needless to say, we have made a few amendments and sent it back to the NFU. We're hopeful that they will accept our version.

The draft code of conduct includes a brief description of the sport including some of our limitations. It also confirms that every member of the BHPA has third party liability cover up to the tune of £5m. If any damage has been caused, or is alleged to have been caused, then the farmer and pilot should record as much information as possible, and exchange contact details. Once the farmer has received sufficient details, he should not unreasonably object to the retrieval of the aircraft.

Back to our 2 angry farmers. I willingly gave my name, address and phone numbers (worth having a 'business' card in future). I was astonished at how much this calmed them down. This allowed us to tell them a bit about our sport and our limitations when it comes to landing. Whilst technically we were trespassing, that isn't a criminal offence and, as long as you agree to leave when challenged, their only realistic course of action is to pursue you for damages in the civil court. Their main concern was what MIGHT have happened if SAY one of their horses had miscarried. They seemed reassured that we all carry third party liability insurance. In the end they shied away from calling the police, and we left on reasonably good terms (with the promise not to land in that particular field again!).

One other thing that came to light afterwards was that if there is ANY possibility of a claim then you must submit an Incident Report Form (IRF). It's a condition of our insurance. Admittedly any out-landing has the potential to result in a claim, but I suggest that a good rule of thumb is to complete an IRF if you have exchanged details with the farmer.

Completing an IRF, with a load of seemingly irrelevant detail (equipment, currency, etc), is a right royal pain in the backside, but that's probably an article for another day…

Fly safely,
Martin Baxter
Chairman

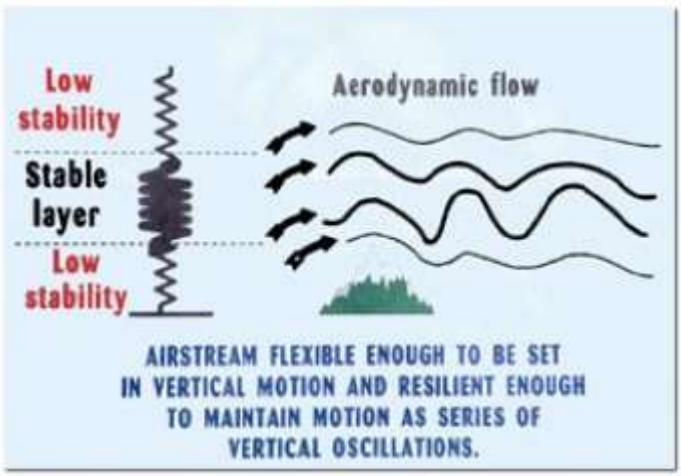
14th Nov

Three of us on Semer today, with wonderful crepuscular rays. Smooth lift but rather dark and chilly so after a bit of a boat about we all went in to land… (petensara)

WAVE !

by Ed Cleasby

Over the years I've experienced flying in wave on a number of occasions. However that was mostly on hang gliders with their extra speed or by attaching a power unit which provided the means to explore a wider area. The very nature of wave and the conditions required to create it mean that paragliders are only occasionally able to connect with it and then only in its most subdued state. It is very worth understanding however, because once in a while you may actually manage to connect with it, but also because it is more prevalent than you may realise and has an effect on site choice and soaring conditions.



Although wave is possible throughout the year I tend to associate it mostly with autumn into winter as this seems to more readily provide the atmospheric conditions most conducive to it setting up. These being

- a stable layer sandwiched between two low stability layers. Basically the idea is to allow the stable layer the ability to bounce downwind off a layer of air as opposed to the ground which would tend to kill it off. One could write a whole book on wave alone as it's quite complex, comes in different types and then there's the maths that go with it. However, weather forecasters will tell you it's the easiest thing to predict and they can be 90% accurate. Our reliance on RASP and search for thermals and convergence lines means we tend to ignore the wave predictors. Wave is most often the reason we find too much, too little wind than forecast – and then wonder how the forecast got it wrong. It didn't – more that we were not looking at all the data.

Formation

How does the atmosphere go about setting up a wave conditions? It needs three elements:

Wind flow perpendicular to the ridge, or nearly so, being within about 30 degrees of perpendicular.

An increasing wind velocity with altitude and wind velocity 20 knots or more near hilltop level.

Either a stable air mass layer aloft or an inversion below about 2,000

The topography of the Dales can work both for and against wave. It can set it in train but can also destroy it if the wavelength is not in synchronisation with the ridges. I was once told that if there is any east in the wind then there is wave, it

may not be especially noticeable but it will have some effect on thermal development by both enhancing the lift in some areas whilst suppressing it in others. Hence the importance of choosing a line to fly. Please bear in mind that wave influences are only one factor in a complex equation that involve air masses and various convergence types. It would be very easy to slide into a deep discussion about wave which is what I wish to avoid – that and my own ignorance. I therefore leave you to do your own study unless someone wishes me to bore them silly for an hour or two one evening. I'll just provide my own take on the Dales wave and how it may relate to flying paragliders.

I have experienced wave flying on the following sites – Wether Fell, Dodd Fell, Semer Water, Cow Close and Barkin Fell. The nicest wave was in west to north westerly winds – the least pleasant in easterlies. The height gains were fairly modest, up to 6500', and the wind speed manageable – the two are related. Hang gliders have climbed to over 12,000' on a number of occasions in the Dales but in wind speeds that would have been beyond paragliders. It seems that the best wave is reserved for the sailplanes, who can handle the biggest wave and hence climb much higher 20 - 30,000'; they can also deal with the frequency of the wave which increases in proportion to the wind speed. In other words they can hop from bar to bar.

Lakes wave from a powered hang glider

There are many occasions in the Dales where one site is blown out whilst another is on the light side, so don't give up – consider what may be going on and change sites. We all know the Wether/Dodd effect which also illustrates how localised wave can be and especially when it's at the frequency that allows for paragliders to use it. Below I've gathered some tips that may be of use to you. However, they will never be a substitute for flying and gaining experience and are a guide and by no means exhaustive.

Guide to Wave Flying

If you lose the lift, push into wind, you have probably drifted backwards. If it's a blue day (or any day really) mark the point of best climb in your gps. Use the map page and zoom in fairly close.

If a classic wave bar exists, think of it as a hill/ridge and apply the same rules of the air. If you get behind it you will go down. When using the lift make your turns away from the cloud.

Most of the wave we are able to fly will not be classic lenticular, but lines of ragged orographic, try to use them to show where the wave is and how it is orientated to

the hill – it is very often not parallel to the hill. Watch for the orographic changing shape, definition, position or closing up.

Wave setting up over Cow Close fell

Watch your ground speed!
You will be flying in an area of lowest windspeed – drift back towards the heavy sink and the wind speed will increase. Leave a margin to allow for the windspeed increasing.

With wave expect it to increase with height but maintain direction. If it is possible to consider jumping to the next wave bar, don't cross the large gap directly. Move to the ends and sneak around the extremities of the bar. You may also find the wind speed increases towards the ends, but it avoids the worst of the sink.My advice on a paraglider is that it's just not worth crossing to another bar downwind unless the wind is light. The sink can be horrendous and have you on the ground from 6000 very fast and probably in the worst place for wind and rotor effects. Go for exploring the wave bar you are in.

Generally a wave day can have all the symptoms of a blown out, rough day early on and the best conditions tend to come later – from mid afternoon onwards. They can also disturb thermal development and make for rough climbs.

Cow Close 3pm – wave established. Note that the glider is facing towards the bar

Wrap up well - it can get very cold at height. Wriggle fingers and toes.

If a ridge is working well - providing better than the usual lift and quite smooth then it's probably in phase with very weak wave.

Conversely, if it's a bit top end and yet the lift seems poor then it's out of phase for the day – somewhere, others may be having an especially good day.

Consider moving sites or listening to their tales of great flying. A poor site in the morning can be working well in the afternoon as the wave sorts itself out.

With wave, the cloud can take several form depending on how strong it is. Consider the difference in some of the photos.

Light, low level orographic over Dodd Fell bar is running NE to SW

Recent (13th November'21) - Wave flying on Inglebrough:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YYeKHWmRQNQ

11th Nov'21–Stags *by GARY SENIOR*

Thermals… (Part 2)

About this article

Will Gadd, in a series of three articles, shares his thoughts on thermals and thermalling. This first part deals with the way thermals form and how they're released from the ground.

Pilot profile

Expert. Has held many site, state and national records.
Has also held one world record. Paragliding straight distance XC.
In 2002, 423.4 km - Zapata, Texas, USA.

Vol bivvied 800km across the North Amerian Rockies with Gavin McClurg over 35 days. National Geographic 'Adventurer of the year 2014/15'

Will Gadd summarises his three articles

The crux of cross-country flying often lies in correctly answering the question, "Where's the next thermal?" If you could answer that question correctly even 90 percent of the time then life would be very, very good. I think it's key for every XC pilot to develop his or her own system for understanding thermals, then continuously refine it. Only in this way will the pilot actually learn something with each "success" or "failure." I often hear students in clinics I teach say, "Ah, I sort of knew that, but this simplifies things a lot." That's the goal: To have a simple, clear system that you can refine each season to produce better results.

I broadly split my thermal-prediction model into two parts: ground-based thermal prediction ideas, and sky-based thermal clues. This article is my attempt to explain to myself and anyone who finds it interesting how thermals form on the ground and how to find them efficiently, part two will deal with the sky, part three with staying in and flying thermals.

Part 1 - Collectors, Wicks and Triggers, on the ground
Part 2 - Thermals and Clouds, deals with the sky
Part 3 - Thermalling technique, staying in and flying thermals

---

Thermals part 2 - Thermals and clouds

This article is part two in a three-part series. Part one covered how thermals form and release from the ground; this article covers the relationship between thermals and clouds. The final article in this series will cover thermal flying techniques.

This article focuses on dealing with our best visible thermal indicators, clouds. There are dozens of books written on lapse rates, instability and the like, so the ideas presented here are more field rules for flying clouds and other sky-based clues rather than a meteorology text, please forgive the gross simplifications I make.

The basis for understanding what's going on in the sky comes from watching it; reading books (or articles like this one!) helps, but you need to have your own on-board sky-interpretation system to fly well. Every good pilot I know has spent literally thousands of hours looking at the sky and trying to figure out what's going on up there. I have spent many blown-out days lying on my back watching the sky swirl over me, and these days are some of the most valuable time I've ever put into flying. Are the clouds being blown to bits? Do they remain relatively constant over set points or form over a set point and then drift off downwind decaying as they move? Do they cycle evenly, starting as thin whispies and then forming into ever-more solid masses before decaying, or do some pop up very quickly and then disperse slowly? Do they have hard, flat bottoms or a rounded, mushy appearance? Each answer to these questions provides a wealth of knowledge about the thermals that are generating these clouds. Clouds are infinitely variable, but I believe they do have patterns that can be learned by watching them.

The big concept here is that clouds cycle based on their attached thermals. As a warm air mass rises it eventually reaches an altitude where its moisture condenses out. This process continues only while the cloud is being fed by a thermal (condensation "pumps" basically act the same as thermals, so I'll treat them the same here for simplicity). At some point the collector or pool of warm air on the ground is exhausted, but the cloud is still being fed by a "bubble" rising above the ground. Eventually no more rising air feeds the cloud and it starts to decay; at this point there is no more lift under it. This is why many of the best-looking clouds often provide no lift when you fly under them; while pretty, they are at the end of their useful cycle. As clouds decay they will in fact usually produce sinking air, which is annoying if you've flown to one expecting an elevator ride back to base. What's more useful is to connect with the rising air under clouds that are still forming.

So how do you tell 'em apart?

The simplest cloud game is to try and predict whether a cloud is forming or decaying; before doing this in flight, I like to play the cloud prediction game while mowing the lawn, driving, or looking out the office window. Pick one cloud and make a snap decision: is it forming or decaying? Then carefully track that particular cloud through the rest of its cycle; if you think it's forming, it will grow in size (either vertically or horizontally or both) while becoming ever-more resistant to light (more suspended water means going from whispies to small "clumps" of moisture to solid white to gray). If it's decaying then it will become ever lighter and slowly fragment into smaller pieces, How long does this process take? Two minutes? Ten? Twenty? Or does it just continue to develop into a monster cumulus savage-your-gliderus? I can seldom make good predictions based on just one look at a cloud, but after watching it for a couple of minutes I can usually tell which direction it's heading. I believe that it's absolutely basic to learn the life cycles of clouds if you want to fly XC; this is the aerial equivalent of knowing how to read.

Michael Champlain, one of the better XC pilots I've met, taught me a good trick to help understand what clouds are doing while you're flying. He recommended taking a series of mental snapshots of the sky as I climbed in a thermal. With every circle I

look downwind and take a quick "picture" of what all the clouds in my predicted flight direction look like; a long climb may allow for 30 or more good snapshots, and with minimal practice I have learned to memorize which clouds are forming and which decaying based on these snapshots. Over the course of a few climbs my snapshots also give me good clues on how long the clouds are lasting, information which then tells me which ones may still be forming after I glide to them. If the cloud cycles are lasting 30 minutes then I can glide for 10 or 15 minutes and still arrive at a growing cloud with plenty of time to catch a ride.

Generally, the more distance between clouds the longer they will last (a larger volume of air is feeding into a single cloud), and the higher cloud base is. If you go on glide toward a cloud that has been forming for 30 minutes and arrive low, the odds are slim that you will find lift no matter how beautiful the cloud over your head is. Many pilots make the mistake of climbing to base, then looking around and heading for whatever cloud looks "best," regardless of where it is in its life cycle. If you arrive at a cloud after it's useful lift cycle then it's worse than gliding into a pure blue hole as there will be sink under it, plus the ground may be shaded, a double hit to your odds of staying in the air. But if you near the top of your climb and see whispies start to pop within gliding distance and head out on glide toward them, then the odds are much better that you will find useful lift.

OK, you're on glide toward a fine forming cloud, but where will you connect with the lift? Again, observing the cloud cycles will tell you. If the wind is stronger aloft than on the ground, the clouds will be forming at their upwind edges and decaying at their downwind edges. This tells you that the thermal will be sloped at some angle from upwind of the cloud to it. If you have a GPS or learn to read your groundspeed even while fairly high, you can figure out how strong the wind gradient is and therefore how much the thermal slopes. As a rule of wing, I visualize thermals in wind gradients of 10 MPH or less as sloping at up to 20 degrees, 20 or less MPH at 30 degrees and so on. Also realize that the gradient will often not be linear; there are many days where you will encounter some sort of strong gradient at a particular altitude; the thermals here will often become disorganized, but if you can fight through this barrier then you may continue on to base. Remember this altitude and anticipate doing battle to get through it instead of getting discouraged and heading off.

Some of the most frustrating XC days come when the winds are slower aloft than they are on the ground; I have found this situation surprisingly often and could never understand how to find thermals until I realized that the clouds were forming on their "downwind" edges and dissipating on their upwind edges! The more moisture-laden areas of the cloud will be on their downwind edges; in this situation you will actually connect with the thermal downwind of the cloud.

The shape and texture of finished clouds also offer a wealth of information. Clouds taller than they are wide generally mean stronger thermals and may lead to over-development later in the day (don't get me started on instability…). Puffy, closely-spaced clouds that cycle relatively quickly but never attain flat or "hard" bottoms generally don't have very good lift under them; however, the light lift will be easy to find, just fly downwind and you'll probably blunder into something. Because these clouds cycle so rapidly it's almost impossible to time your arrival under one that's developing. However, they often form up in general areas, and these areas will offer better chances of staying in the air. On humid days the sky will be absolutely filled with evenly spaced clouds; unfortunately, only a few of these clouds will be active while the vast majority are slowly and irritatingly decaying. On dryer days the few clouds that are in the sky will most likely be active, but make sure to get there while

they are still in their active cycle. Finally, flat cloud bases indicate well-formed thermals feeding continuously. Rounded, puffy bases usually indicate less well-formed feeder thermals and weaker lift.

On days with larger clouds, pay careful attention to what part of the base is highest; the best lift will almost always be feeding to the highest part of the cloud. As you climb to base, keep looking around, you may be able to get higher under a different portion of the cloud than you climbed to it under. This is especially common when flying the border between moist and relatively dry air masses; I have seen clouds that are stepped up to 4,000 feet on the Texas dry line.

In addition to understanding what kind of clouds to fly under, most people want to know what kind of clouds to avoid It's often difficult to tell what your particular cloud is doing as you climb because the cloud tends to block your side-view of it; however, if you're taking mental snapshots with each circle then you should have a good idea of what's going on with the other clouds.

It's possible that you are thermalling up under the one giant cu-nimb in the sky, but it's rare. If the sky is starting to over-develop all around you then it's probably time to get out of the air regardless of what's happening over your head. Even large clouds can cycle regularly; some days with cumulus clouds up to five or ten miles across are fine to fly on, but as soon as the clouds start growing much higher than they are wide I usually find myself either running for a much better portion of the sky or landing.

After I land and my glider is secure I like to really watch what happens to the clouds I was worried about; did they cycle harmlessly, or are they continuing to blow up? If they did over-develop, how long did it take from the point I called my flight off to when the first gust front hit the ground? I have occasionally been frustrated that I landed early, but the few times I've pushed and stayed in the air too long were truly terrifying. The more I fly, the more conservative I become. If the clouds in the sky start "spiking" radically and look like fists on a day when the forecast is for thunderstorms then land immediately. Observing the sky intensely while flying isn't just about finding the next good climb; it is the basis for safe flying.

This leads me to the broader part of this article: In general, clouds form in related patterns. These patterns may be due to any combination of literally thousands of factors (again, it's worth understanding the meteorology, buy a book), but these areas of instability are where you want to be flying to connect with the lift. I've blundered off into large blue areas only to hit the dirt enough to believe this. It's almost always worth flying the clouds around the edge of a blue hole rather than jamming straight through it, no matter how much more direct the blue line looks. Sail plane pilots have the luxury of making huge transitions across sky features up to a hundred miles apart, we generally don't.

Most pilots dream of getting under cloud streets and flying straight until dark; while this does happen occasionally, I've found it more useful to treat streets as linked but individual clouds. If the street is set up with flat, hard bottoms and is maintaining good colour (dense but not decaying and not over-developing as you fly along it, then stuff the bar and fly as fast as your understanding of speed to fly theory allows. But keep looking ahead and analyzing what is going on; sooner or later the clouds will end, and you need to be paying attention to what's happening in front of you as well as to either side. I've often found it's better to treat large gaps in streets as blue holes and jump sideways to another street if the gap in front of you is wider than the lateral jump by a significant margin.

Many “blue days” actually offer some very good sky-based clues. For starters, even if clouds don’t form at the top of thermals, “haze domes” often will. These are areas where the light refracts differently through the air due to more moisture, dust or just a different air mass. I’ve seen haze domes most frequently when flying relatively stable blue days in Mexico and the desert southwest; often the haze domes are marked simply by areas of the sky that are less blue. Haze domes are also often the precursors to proper clouds - in the morning you might just get haze domes at an inversion level, but they still mark lift and often are the first areas to pop through an inversion and become clouds. Blue days will often still form dust devils or swirling thermal cores; if you can see hay, fine dust or other debris in the air then that’s a sign of a thermal core as well.

Flying strategies

The classic model of thermal formation suggests one rising cylinder of air feeding one cloud. In reality, I picture the thermals feeding into clouds as trees, with many small thermal “roots” feeding into larger ones until they reach the trunk and lead to the cloud. The higher you are above the ground, the farther apart the “trunks” are and the closer to the clouds you have to fly to truly intercept a large thermal.

Anyone who has flown competitions will have seen gliders climbing relatively close together but in different cores before joining and continuing to base. Gliders that are low can take advantage of the smaller “root thermals,” not just the trunks. If you’re in the “low” zone, meaning below half way below cloud base, then you will most likely find relatively small cores.

Sailplanes have a relatively hard time taking advantage of these lower-altitude thermals, but we can core up in very small circles, following the individual roots until they expand and join with other thermals. If you’re below half the distance between the ground and the cloud then you can pretty much forget intercepting a large core that connects to the cloud; however, most clouds are fed by multiple smaller cores that join together, so searching over good collectors and triggers upwind of clouds is a good strategy (remember to know the day’s gradients for which way the thermals will slope—the thermals may be “downwind” of the clouds on days with an inverted gradient).

I usually try to connect the collectors and triggers to the clouds they are feeding; this is also useful for predicting where the cloud is in its life cycle. For example, clouds that form over mountain ranges are generally flushed downwind. Once they are flushed past their thermal sources there may still be lift under the cloud as the thermal “bubble” continues to feed it, but you need to arrive relatively high to climb in this bubble no matter how great the cloud looks.

The higher the cloudbase, the longer your glide to the next climb will be (unless you have the good luck to be flying under a street of some kind). Reichmann predicts that the distance between clouds is approximately two and a half times their distance above the ground. If the base is 5,000 feet above the ground then the distance between thermal “trunks” is likely to be 12,500 feet (the distance between the “roots” will likely be somewhat less). Even if your glider only goes at 5:1 then you should have a reasonably good chance of intercepting a thermal before intercepting the ground!

Theoretically, it's very rare to glide all the way from base to the ground without hitting lift. In reality, I have done it often, particularly on blue days, but usually in retrospect I went gliding off into a large blue hole or down a sink street and should have turned 90 degrees after sinking more than half the distance between base and the ground to find lift. In the flats I think lift generally forms in lines and so does sink; even on blue days, the next logical place to look for a thermal is above a good collector/trigger downwind of your last climb.

In the mountains the thermals and clouds generally form above ranges which may or may not be oriented with your planned flight or wind direction. If you are crossing anything except very narrow mountain valleys on very high-base days then you need to base your decisions less on what the clouds are doing and more on the ground-based tactics covered in the previous article. If you are crossing small gaps while flying along a range then it's often reasonable to use the clouds to plan your next climb, especially in the American West where base can exceed our FAA-imposed limit of 18,000 feet regularly.

Most of our ranges in North America run roughly north-south, while the wind predominantly blows from west to east. One good trick for crossing the valleys between ranges is to climb to base, then drift over the gap with a cloud. This is slow, but XC flying is often more about staying in the air than speed. I've used this trick several times at King Mountain and other sites to beat gliders with far better glide ratios. The cloud will eventually start seriously decaying, so it's better to leave it before this point or you will have to deal with sinking air.

Don't get too aggravated if you can't get to base, I generally only get there on days with well-organized climbs leading into flat-bottomed, dense clouds. On more humid days with poor lapse rates (oops, slipping into tech talk here), there may be plenty of clouds but no way in hell to get them. Do note how high you got in your climb before it disintegrated, and roughly how far below base you were.

If your first climb of the day ended at 6,000 feet and base looked to be at about 8,000, then expect that the top of your next few climbs may be at a similar altitude unless the clouds start looking better or moving higher. Cloud base usually moves higher throughout the day, and climbs generally improve until late afternoon. If the clouds go to 10,000 feet and start looking really solid, then you might expect to climb higher and closer to the clouds.

The best way to truly understand the sky is to study it with near religious fervour. Read the books and understand the meteorology of any given day, then correlate what was predicted to what actually happened on your flight. If you can't get into the air due to earthly responsibilities you can still learn a tremendous amount about flying. This will help you immeasurably when it comes time to make decisions while under your glider. My next article will deal with flying your glider in thermals and putting everything in these last two articles together. Happy flights!

part 3 next month

AGM Committee Reports

Remember the AGM will be held on 2nd December these are the reports that will be presented (here for reading before the event), they are also available on the forum.

Chairman's Report

Committee

Rosie Ireland was forced to step down when husband Ben was posted down south. Stef Sykes was man enough to stick his head above the parapet, and the committee duly co-opted him onto the committee in May. There have not been any other changes.

COVID-19

We cancelled the Farmers' Dinner and decided not distribute Christmas drinks. Instead, we thanked landowners by sending vouchers, and a letter of explanation through the post. The cost was roughly the same. The gesture was appreciated and we had a number of letters of thanks. Hats off to Pete Logan and Rahul Basu who managed to organise a remote coaching course with the BHPA during February.

The main restrictions were lifted in March so the flying season wasn't disrupted nearly as much as it was last year. In late May David May organised a delayed reserve repack which was well attended. By September we had resumed face to face club nights. Thanks to Tam, Stef, Adam and Ed, the club held an inaugural social weekend and Hike & Fly competition.

Nobody knows what the winter season will bring but, as things stand, we hope to hold a face-to-face AGM and Farmers' Dinner.

Weather Station

The club purchased a remote weather station which was erected on Yorburgh (NE of Wether Fell) once COVID-19 restrictions eased. Thanks to all involved but especially to Simon Tomlinson and Trevor Birkbeck. Active Edge generously donated £300 towards the project.

Leeds Bradford Airport

LBA has launched another Airspace Change Proposal. I have again joined forces with the 2 local BGA representatives to form the Regional Soaring Airspace Group, in order to respond to the proposal. The DSC and PSC have been notified.

Membership

It was with some sadness that the committee expelled a member for instructing without a suitable BHPA licence. He is no longer a member of the BHPA.

Martin Baxter
Chairman

Secretary's Report 2021

A good year for the club. Some awesome flights in/from the Dales, the club riding high in the XC league, a growing membership, 2 weather stations installed, a revamped website, the Dales Hike and Fly event and club social both being established.

All in all, it's a very good time to be flying in the Dales. In particular, it's great to see new blood coming into the club, getting established and developing their flying and joining us in our amazing sport.

With the ease of use of social media, getting organised for flying days has never been easier. Whilst this is great in getting people to a right hill, it has also resulted in some busy days on hills that have not often seen such numbers. This has attracted one or two adverse comments during the year. Please keep abreast of site issues by reading site guides regularly – they could well have changed since the last time you flew. We are very privileged that people let us fly from their land, and that we are welcomed by (most) people in the local community. We want to keep it that way!

Here's to and even better 2022 – have a great year everyone.

Mark Morrison (Tam)
Club Secretary

Membership Report 2021

2021 Highlights

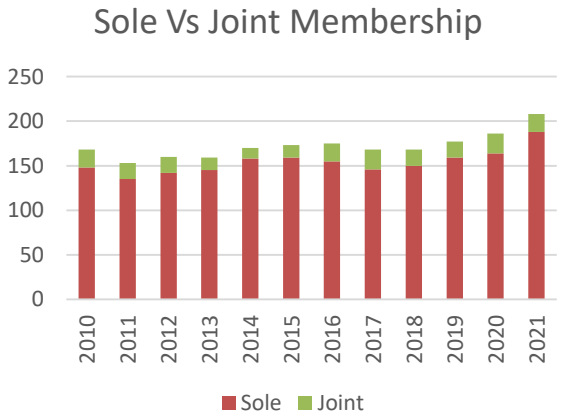
208 paid up members, our membership numbers continue to increase consistently, and increasing by 22 from 2020.

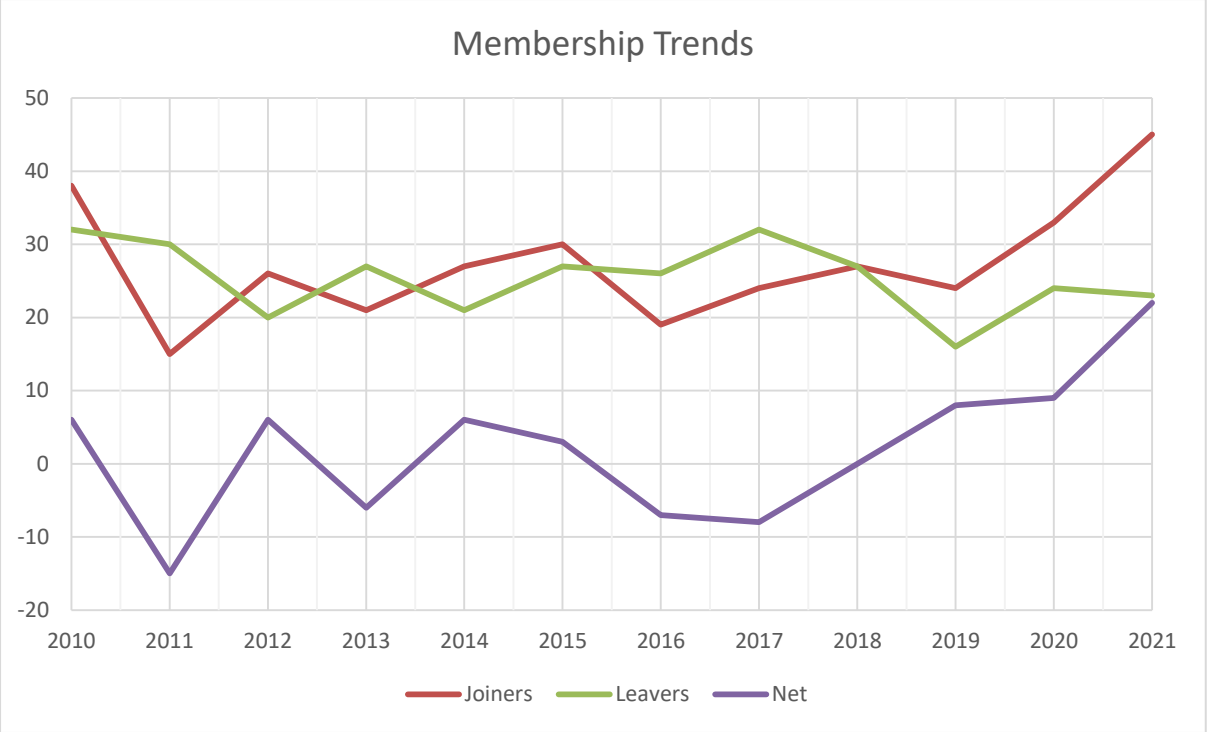
Just under 80% of members renewed from last year.

77% of members renewed or joined by the end of February to take advantage of the 10% discount for prompt electronic payment.

Everyone paid electronically this year.

Membership Mojo has improved the administration of members.





Rahul Basu
Membership Secretary

Sites South Report 2021

A quick look at the club forum shows that all the southern sites in the site guide were flown on at least one occasion during the year. Possibly, pilots were choosing to fly closer to home at points due to Covid?

The Keelham Farm Shop gift vouchers sent in lieu of Christmas drinks and the Farmers Dinner event were well received, as evidenced by the appreciative notes received from farmers. These were published on the forum and in Skywords.

The only site issue to mention was the loss of the landing field to the North West of the village of Hawkswick. The field is not owned by one of our “regular “ farmers, and on making contact with the farmer we were requested to discontinue our use of the field. (The landing field by the bridge is still ok to use)

I will continue to look for an alternative for the lost field.

The Christmas Drinks delivery is due to go ahead as normal this year and I look forward to meeting as many of our farmers as possible, although as usual many of them will be out working when I drop by. It would be good if it didn’t snow this year!

Shaun Pickard
Sites Officer South

Sites North Report 2021

Wether Fell – Our new Holfuy weather station situated on Yorburgh has proved very successful since it was installed in May. Many thanks must be given to Dean of Active Edge for his generous financial contribution towards the cost of the station. Thanks also to Trev, Pete & Stef for their help installing the station. The maximum wind gust recorded so far has been 72mph. We intend to do a regular 6 monthly inspection starting in December.

Dodd Fell - As you are probably aware, The Woodland Trust has bought 550 acres of land at Snaizeholme just below the Pennine Way for the purpose of "rewilding". The area stops short of our official take off area. Have a look at the forum for full details - Site Issues/Dodd Fell. The BOS hang gliding competition held in June was fortunate to have access to the East face of Dodd due to the prevailing wind conditions. Thanks must be given to the local landowners for their support throughout the competition.

Semer Water - We had a few issues on a couple of busy days with complaints about our parking from a local farming family. They were also upset that we did not stop flying while they were on their horses nearby. Tam did a sterling job of calming them down over the following weeks. I have arranged with the farmer that owns the field on the corner where we normally park, that we can park up to 6 cars in his field to help alleviate some of the congestion issues. I suggest you don't park in the field when it's muddy as you probably won't get out. See Site Guide for full details.

Stags Fell – Plenty of thistles this year making launching & landing a bit tricky. The owners main concern is still that nobody lands on the open moor.

Whernside - Parking is still very restricted, please car share where possible.

Other Sites – Business as usual. The farmers seem glad to see us out flying again.

Farmers Dinner – The planned 2021 dinner was reluctantly cancelled due to the ongoing COVID situation at the time. Trev has provisionally booked The Knight Stainforth for 19th March 2022. This will be confirmed at the next committee meeting.

Booze Run (May be) – This will depend on the confirmation of the 2022 Farmers Dinner. Vouchers may be an option again.

Questions – If you have any questions regarding our sites, please feel free to ask.

See you on a hill soon.

Simon Tomlinson
Sites Officer North

Safety Officer's Report 2021

There were 2 accidents either involving DHPC members or on DHPC sites in 2021. Thankfully not very serious and the pilots have made a good recovery. There were a number of incidents – a significant collapse high in the lakes (which is well documented), a very close encounter with a sailplane over Bradwell and a ground handling incident on Carlton involving a Paraglider and a Hang-glider.

Thank you to all who helped out at the time and to those who submitted Incident Reports via the BHPA website (https://contact.bhpa.co.uk/incident.php). Incident/Accident reporting is an

important part of the process and enables us to learn and improve the safety of our sport as a whole.

2021 (1 accident)

- May 29 - Reserve Repack. 29 pilots attended.
- Apr 15 – Accident on Whernside (PG)
- Apr 17 – Accident on Blease (PG)

2020 (1 accident)

- Feb 01 - Reserve Repack. 37 pilots attended.
- Mar 05 – Accident above Kettlewell (PG)
- Mar 06 – Accidental reserve deployment (PG)
- Jul 19 – Ground handling incident on Carlton Bank (PG)
- Aug 14 – Low level collapse on Gregareth (PG)

2019 (6 accidents. 3 in the UK - 2 on DHPC sites - and 3 abroad)

- Feb 09/10 - Joint CSC/DHPC First Aid course in Kirkby Stephen.
- Feb 09 - Reserve Repack. 28 pilots attended.
- Apr – Accident at Simon Fell (PG)
- Apr – Accident at Primrose Valley (PG)
- May – Accident at Whernside (PG)
- Jun – France (PG)
- Jul – France (PG)
- Oct – India (PG)

2018 (3 accidents)

- Jan 27/28 - Joint CSC/DHPC First Aid course in Kirkby Stephen.
- Feb 05 – Accident at Ingleborough (PG)
- Feb 24 - Reserve Repack. 33 pilots attended.
- May 05 – Accident at Windbank (PG)
- May 14 – Accident at Murton Pike (PG)

2017 (3 accidents)

- Mar 4 - Reserve Repack. 33 pilots attended.
- May 10 - AIRPROX
- May 10 - Accident at Wether Fell (PG)
- Jul 8 - Accident at Dodd Fell (PG)
- Aug 20 - Accident at Bradwell (PG)
- A number of new Club Coaches

2016 (5 accidents)

- 12 Mar - DHPC repack. 35 pilots attended.
- 8 May - Accident at Semer Water (ATOS).
- 14 Jul - Accident at Wether Fell (ATOS) and Tailbridge (PG).
- 2 Oct - Accident at Cow Close Fell (PG) and Model Ridge (HG).

Safe flying

David May
DHPC Safety Officer

Coaching Report 2021

My first full year as Chief Coach. Number of coaches increased to 16 PG & 3 HG.

Online Club Coaches course held in February and organised by Rahul. Pete regained his endorsement, with Rahul Basu, Graham McAnany & Chris Baird qualifying.

Five coaching articles in the magazine this year on setting out what I'd like to do, XC Buddies, Evaluating your flying, Ground handling and a great safety message from Jake.

Covid forced a late start to formal coaching meetings. Pete ran three loosely organised coaching sessions covering site guidance, analysis and task witnessing for ~16 club pilots. Reports from the coaching team suggest coaching activity is down a little with fewer CPs coming out of training. A big thank you to our coaches this year for giving their time and expertise.

We have two new pilots, Stephen Craven & Clive Sury (congratulations) with several more to follow in the Western Dales, thanks to Ed's stewardship. Pete Balmforth and David May assisted in delivering pilot exam lectures which are now online at:
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLhf1nMr-O715QgIhqUGMSuLhurGJturRy

Pete Logan
Chief Coach

Social Secretary's Report 2021

Following Roses move south, I have had the pleasure of acting as your social secretary since May this year.

I've assisted tam in his grand endeavour of kicking off the X dales summer social which he managed to coordinate with Ed Cleasby to provide a superb set of challenges which I hope will form the basis to an annual event.

In September the off season evening events started with a fine display of local knowledge from head coach Pete Logan. A month later we had an international presentation from author of "A Beginner's guide to Hike & Fly" Amilios Apostolopoulos (a copy of which has been added to the library), and last month we enjoyed Richard Meek regaling us with the out takes of one of his massive xcs of the year all the way to Lanark.

With more planned for the remaining months, I hope to remain your secretary in this role.

All the best

Stef Sykes
Social Secretary