

SKYWORDS

November 2020

Chairman's Chat

At last week's meeting the committee decided to cancel the Farmers' Dinner that had been planned for Feb 21. COVID-19 restrictions had made it impossible to secure a venue, let alone agree a costed menu that we could circulate to members and farmers in sufficient time. Even if we had managed to secure a booking there was some doubt about whether farmers and members would be allowed, or want, to attend.

Whilst the farmers welcome the annual Christmas drinks that we provide; the sites officers expressed some concern that driving around every farmer in the Dales might not be sensible in the current circumstances. Instead we decided to post a gift voucher to every farmer who allows us to fly from their land.

We also agreed to increase the value of the voucher above what it would normally cost to provide the Christmas drinks, using the savings made from the cancelled dinner. It was a lively debate which opened 'Pandora's Box' again: we also considered reducing subscriptions and/or increasing the contribution to the Flying Fund. In the end we concluded that any short term (one year we hope) gain was less important than maintaining the goodwill of the farmers. We are conscious of the dangers of setting a precedent, particularly amongst those farmers who don't normally attend the dinner. Yours truly will try to explain the rationale in a letter to all farmers which will accompany the vouchers. Our intention is to return to the 'new normal' as soon as circumstances allow. As has been demonstrated many times in the past, a face to face meeting over a few drinks is the best way to make friends and maintain relationships.

Elsewhere in this edition you will be invited to participate in the online/[forum](#) version of this year's AGM. One of the threads covers Any Other Business. Traditionally this would be your face to face opportunity to make suggestions for the new committee to consider. It could be anything from purchasing a new weather station, buying a club tandem kit or an electric retrieve vehicle, through to renaming the club. You are, of course, welcome to make these suggestions at any time, but especially in the current circumstances which make it difficult to meet up in person. The committee's email addresses are all available from the club [website](#).

Fly safely,

Martin Baxter
Chairman

Accidents: Pilot Error or Just Bad Luck?

Incidents and accidents, prevention or cure: in one way or another the subject of every safety article. Accidents in particular - we all want to avoid injury and since every accident begins life as an incident, it would be good to know why some incidents turn into accidents and others don't? We report accidents for the most part we but don't tend to report incidents so it is difficult to say what percentage of incidents result in injury but at a guess I'd say it's pretty low. Why is this? What is the differentiator? The general consensus is that it comes down to pilot error: something the pilot did wrong or didn't do, or could have done differently or better, caused the injury. But is this really the case?

I don't like the term 'pilot error' as it has a negative undertone and automatically assumes the pilot is at fault. This can make it easier for us to write the pilot off - as a risk taker perhaps, a bit deluded in their own skill level maybe or just plain foolish. By putting the pilot in a box, one we don't believe we are in ourselves, it makes it easier for us to disassociate from the accident. Because, well it's just not something we would do, right? But that misses the point - we are all human, we are all capable of making mistakes, even what may seem in retrospect like the most silly mistake, error of judgement, lapse of memory etc. And sometimes it may not even be a mistake on the part of the pilot - in much the same way as some car accidents are not our fault. If we can identify what the pilot could have done differently we have the opportunity to learn from somebody else's unfortunate experience ... and hopefully avoid it ourselves. It's not a name-and-shame exercise or an excuse to ridicule the pilot: this approach will just result in incidents/accidents going unreported and we lose a hugely valuable opportunity to learn and to improve the safety of the sport overall.

So, rather than 'pilot error' I prefer the term 'pilot input': on any given flying day we will provide many inputs that will range across the scale from good to poor. That's what learning is all about. Pilot input is more than just wing control - it includes things like our understanding of what is going on, decision making, equipment we use, our state of mind and body, how we maintain our equipment, the checks we perform, our focus in any particular moment etc. In short, everything we have control over. Often poor pilot input is identified as a badly executed recovery attempt after a collapse when really, the recovery attempt is just the last link in a chain of events. Most pilot input is concerned with prevention - the better our understanding and decision making, the more appropriate our equipment, the more tuned our flying skills (in particular our active flying), the better our mental and physical state, the more thorough our pre-flight checks ... it all works towards avoiding the incident in the first place. The actual recovery skills only come into play once something goes awry which is at the very end of the chain, our last chance to influence a happy outcome.

But can we really say that it is poor pilot input that is the cause of injury? For example, due to some poor control a pilot induces a collapse as they are about to land which results in a stumble to one side. From a viewers perspective it's pretty benign - we've all messed up a landing like this at one time or another. We make a personal note not to do that again and have a laugh about it in the pub later. But ... your foot gets snagged as you stumble, on a tuft of grass maybe or a rabbit hole and you break an ankle. That's just plain unlucky. Can we really say it was the poor pilot input that caused the injury? If that were the case surely you'd expect to be injured every time you get it wrong.

I think we can also be a little too enthusiastic to attribute fault to the pilot. With some accidents it's just not reasonable to assume the pilot is at fault. Take for example a pilot who is practicing top landings. The site is perfectly suitable to the task and there are no known risks at the site. The pilot has already performed multiple top landings at the same point without any issue. However, on the last attempt they encounter turbulence at low level and land heavily sustaining an injury. With the benefit of hind-sight we may be able to hypothesize a cause, a likely candidate, a change in conditions combined with some peculiarity of the site perhaps. But if this has never been considered an issue at this site before and the pilot has taken all reasonable precautions, can we really say the pilot is at fault? No doubt the pilot's actions contributed to the incident but where was the fault?

In short, I think pilot input is the primary factor in creating an incident, regardless of whether they are aware of the risk or not. But, once the incident develops then it is luck that decides whether it results in injury ... and to what extent. Of course, good pilot input in the recovery effort will minimise our risk but, ultimately luck will decide if there is injury. Good luck or bad luck, whichever way you like to think of it: good luck that we get away with it most of the time, or bad luck that sometimes we don't. Superstition aside, there isn't really anything new or magical about luck - its just the infinite combination of factors that we can't be expected to predict or control.

One of the most significant factors whether an incident results in injury is the height above ground when it happens. A collapse at 3000' AGL is far less likely to result in injury than the same collapse at 30' AGL. Its a simple matter of numbers: how much height we have to lose as we attempt recovery, or deploy our emergency parachute before hitting the ground. If we accept that poor pilot input is the cause of the incident in the first place then it's unreasonable to expect that we only make poor inputs at height. So luck becomes a factor in the where and when. If we are really unlucky, a collapse happens low enough such that, regardless of how perfectly we might react to the situation, there is just no way to avoid hitting the ground harder and with less control than desired. And when you factor in our less than perfect recovery skills, that critical height can be a lot higher than imagined.

Most of us hardly ever practice our recovery skills if at all. Perhaps a few manoeuvres on a SIV course every few years. We rely on the passive safety of our wing, some understanding of what should be done and the general wing control we learn in our day-to-day flying. But good recovery requires a specific set of skills and like any skill they need to be practiced to be mastered. Without this level of mastery its unreasonable to expect that how we react in the event of a collapse will be automatic, timely and precise. I think the best most of us can hope for is that we sort of do the the right thing at sort of the right time or, at the very least, we don't do anything to make the situation worse. The good news is that most of the time this is perfectly adequate - which is probably more testament to the amazing technology we fly these days than anything else. But every now and again, rarely, we may experience an incident that requires more precision and reactive speed than we have mastered. How we respond to this situation is likely to be inadequate in one way or another and how this inadequacy affects the outcome will be a matter of luck: it may evolve into something more serious or it may just delay the recovery a little longer than necessary. Either way, if we are really unlucky, we will use up more height than we have to spare.

So where does that leave us? Is it all really just a game of chance, a roll of the dice? Well, no of course not. There is a great deal we can do to minimize our risk of injury. And the good news is that it is mostly to do with prevention and relatively straight forward. The poor pilot inputs we make that cause incidents are generally far more easily avoidable than the mishandled efforts we make in recovering from them. This is because the former includes things like taking off without our speedbar attached for example or choosing to land in the lee of a tree line because it is closer to our car, all easily avoidable whereas the latter requires training, time and money.

So we play a much bigger role in avoiding an incident that we do in recovering from one. This is because once an incident develops, we have to share the recovery space with luck. Pilot input is primarily involved with prevention. So ... consider the forecast before you go flying, read the site guide, ask questions if you are unsure, don't clip in without a helmet on, don't rush your pre-flight checks, learn to ground handle, consider your choice of landing spot based on safety rather than convenience, be aware that if you fly tired or upset in some way there is greater risk of incident etc. All of these are quite easy to do, all will reduce your risk of incident which ultimately minimizes the space luck has to play.

Let's take a real world example of an incident as an example. My thanks to the pilot in question, Richard Meek, for making the video available and being open to discuss. There's nothing particularly unique to this incident (at least from an observer's perspective - I'm sure Richard might disagree): a large collapse at low level with a well performed recovery. It stands out primarily because it was captured on camera. I think it is a good example of the lifecycle of an incident: a poor pre-flight check misses a knot in the lines, leading to a decision to return to land and a subsequent collapse. Due to the low level, the recovery needed to be quick and precise to avoid impact. I interviewed Richard about the incident and he put it up on YouTube (url at the bottom). It's a big collapse and the recovery is impressive. But what drew me to the video was the significant swoop/surge over the ground after recovery. I got a real sense of 'wow, that was close' and it got me thinking about the what if. Based on his igc track, Richard estimates he lost 20m and cleared the ground by 16m or so. That's close. What if ... the wing collapsed when a little lower ... or the knot was on the other side of the wing? As it happened the knot was on the side of the wing furthest from the hill so there was a natural tendency for the wing to turn out from the hill when it collapsed, providing a little extra height agl. Of course, a well-trained pilot can allow the wing to turn out from the hill during recovery but this requires training as it needs to be instinctive. But it certainly helps if it is the natural tendency of the wing in the first place. The knot was missed during the preflight check so it could have been on either side.

So to put it simply - if you want to avoid the accident then concentrate on avoiding the incident as this minimizes the space luck has to play. Prevention, not cure, gives you the best chance. So to put it simply - if you want to avoid the accident then concentrate on avoiding the incident as this minimizes the space luck has to play.

YouTube Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ynneaGpheag&feature=youtu.be>



Safe flying

**DHPC Safety Officer
David May**

A good day on Wether Fell

It's Monday! Wednesday's looking good, and there's a 2nd lock down coming. Time to cancel a few jobs and get myself out there! Social media began to buzz Tuesday night. Who's coming out? Where will be best, is it too North, too light, too strong? Just right?

Wether Fell seemed to be the best option for me. So cancelled the days jobs and loaded up. a good breakfast. Magda, (the wife) encouraging me out the door with a flask and sandwiches. The rain at the weekend had cut Masham off and when I arrived there the road closed signs were still up! But I'll ignore those. Fortunately, a lorry was in front so I got a good idea how deep the water was and got past safely. The journey out there was, as always fantastic. Made even better by the autumn colours every turn was a delight, with blue skies and not a lot of wind the day was looking great. The weather vane at East Witton church has the wind just north of West, not as northerly as predicted, Peachy,

Arriving at Wether to find Colin about to fly and Bob and Tony already rigged I got set up, had a sandwich and got ready to fly. By the time I had done the usual faffing, Simon had turned up and kindly helped me onto launch, hang checked. And away! Into super smooth air, clear blue skies. Sorting out my harness zipped up, angle of dangle checked, a little bit of string pulled and I relaxed,



looking around, counting the Paragliders taking note of colours.

Checking on the other hang gliders, 4 of us in the air. I tried to follow Tony, he's flying his "ZEN" PUMA built by Avian, Zen because it's "one with everything" - technically my T2C, Wills Wings, should out-perform a PUMA, but it could be

down to the pilot, maybe he's a bit lighter? Floating higher. I'll chase him and catch him up. But maybe he's a bit heavier or the gliders smaller? The PUMA just seems to do that bit better. Colin had been way out over Dodd fell at the North end, he whizzed past on his T2C and cruised to his usual perfect landing.

Still looking everywhere, the air became a bit more buoyant, with the occasional thermal allowing some 360s and a climb almost to cloud base at 500ft ato. I started following Dean and flying with the lightest touch on the bar trying to feel every bit of lift, slowly up, slowly down, slowly up. At one point sharing a few 360s with a pair of Paragliders, the speed difference is so noticeable, allowing me to overtake and manoeuvre around them, easy when it's not too crowded, and it helps when everyone is keeping a good look out.

Simon was flying, and he had a camera on! Time to chase the camera. Don't think I made it onto film, got a bit distracted by a 4 up climb! That soon disappeared over the back and that was probably the last of the day. I had had an hour looking at the scenery sharing the air, and figured it would be a good time to land, having watched Tony's approach earlier, which seemed low and confident, I opted for a higher approach from the opposite direction but as I got to the North end, the lift was going and I ended up copying his approach a fast down wind leg, trying to turn, before the wall at the back of the field to leave plenty of height to make final adjustments, nah.

A screaming turn that drifted me over the wall losing height rapidly. Back pointing into wind, cleared the wall, pulled in, and the ground came up rapidly, dragging feet to slow down. As the airspeed dropped off time to flare, but not quite into wind, the glider shot up stopping all forward movement but drifted to the left, the wingtip touching one of the lumps with a quiet crunch.

Standing there, upright safe. Not a bad landing, except that drooping wing tip.

That was my flying finished for the day, the fibre glass rod that curves the last part of the wing had cracked, bother!, not desperately expensive, and I have a spare! But not here...

Kev Gay

Website Redesign – Image Request

As the existing website has not undergone a facelift for nearly a decade, there is a plan to update this soon (**Editor:** see website report in Committee reports later). To this end we are looking for a number of high quality images.

To this end can I request from the membership any high quality images that you may have taken over the past few years of flying in the Dales.

Such images are generally too large to pass through the standard email system, therefore please submit these using the www.wetransfer.com service (free), and sending them to website@dhpc.org.uk.

Alex Colbeck
Website

DHPC goes digital!

We are always looking for ways to improve the membership experience for existing club members and new applicants. Following a limited trial over the summer, this month we have introduced a new online membership management system to manage the club's membership database and member communications. The new system uses the [Membermojo](#) service, which has already been adopted by many other clubs and associations across the UK.

Our new system is up and running and is available now, and as a club member you have secure access to your own Member Page where you can view and change your membership details. Why not try it for yourself by signing in and checking the details we hold for you on your membership record? For safety/emergency reasons it's important we have your correct contact details, especially your telephone number (preferably a mobile number). You can also add another telephone number, for example an emergency contact (ICE) number, if you want to. We will be using the Membermojo system to send out club announcements and communications emails from now on, using the email address you specify in your profile.

How to sign in to your Member Page

To sign in you don't need a password. You can sign in using a web browser on your computer or on your smartphone. You don't need a password. Simply go to the membership page on the DHPC website and click on the link to the [Member Page](#) for existing members:

A screenshot of the Membermojo sign-in page for Dales Hang Gliding & Paragliding Club. The page title is 'Sign In to Dales Hang Gliding & Paragliding Club at membermojo'. It states 'You do not need a password to Sign In.' and asks the user to 'Enter your membership email address so we can send some simple instructions.' There is a text input field for the email address, with the example 'lver@glidenormal.com' entered. Below the input field are two buttons: 'Sign In with email' (highlighted with a red circle) and 'Sign In with password'. At the bottom, there is a link for 'Membership Enquiries', the website URL 'www.dhpc.org.uk', and a note 'Powered by membermojo'.

This will take you to the Membermojo sign-in page. Enter your email address (this must match the address we hold for you) and then click the orange "Sign In with email" button:

You will be sent an email from Dales Hang Gliding & Paragliding Club (noreply.dhpc@membermojo.co.uk) containing a link to sign in. This one-time link is only valid for two hours. If you don't receive the email within a few minutes try checking your spam folder. Click the link to sign in and see your Member Page, where you will be able to view and edit your membership details:



Once you have signed in you can also set a password to use instead of the email link in future if you prefer (if you forget your password you can always go back to the email link method).

We will be using the system to manage your membership renewal when it becomes due in the New Year - we'll let you know more about that a little closer to the time.

Benefits for new joiners too

The new system brings an improved experience for people who want to join our club too. New applicants are now able to see our subscription fees and complete a simple application form electronically on our website; when they submit their membership application online they receive an acknowledgement email automatically, containing introductory club information and details of how to pay their subscription.

We're looking after your personal information

As a result of introducing our new membership management system we have updated our data processing statement. Please take a minute to read it at <https://www.dhpc.org.uk/membership/data-processing-statement> . As always, we are committed to protecting your privacy. Your information is safe and secure in the **Membermojo** system, and with the introduction of this system we have reduced the number of places where your details need to be stored. You can read more about how Membermojo keeps your data secure at <https://membermojo.co.uk/mm/help/security> .

The new system is designed to be straightforward to use. If you have any queries, or have any suggestions for improvements, please contact me at membership@dhpc.org.uk

Tim Rogers
Membership Secretary

It's not all about the numbers

With COVID-19 rearing its ugly crown from the beginning of the year, it was always a “when” as opposed to an “if” regarding a lockdown. It finally happened on the 23rd March with the XC season only just starting. Chris Kay kicked things off with a 36km flight from Cow Close Fell on the 5th of March and Pete D did a short 22km hop from Brantside the following day.

And that was it, no flying permitted, the XC league on hold and competitions big and small around the globe were slowly cancelled. In the UK, what followed was two months of glorious sunshine and light winds; conditions possibly akin to waterboarding for some locked-down cross-country pilots? Thank goodness cycling and running were still permitted; personally I racked up in excess of 5000km over the next few months.

The green light was finally given for flying in the middle of May, although cross-country was discouraged at first, and understandably a number of pilots chose to not jump in straightaway. Thankfully the Dales got away with the delayed season start and collective of rusty pilots without any consequence; sadly that was not the case throughout the UK.

The first flight back for many was a near perfect thermic ridge soaring day on Windbank on the 21st of May. Having been cheated for so long, it was clear to see the relief on everyone's faces as we stood 2m apart in the landing field at the end of the day. The focus for many that day was just to get some much needed airtime, and possibly the company. However, some astute pilots, realising this was going to be a very different sort of year, cracked on with the popular NCT task (<http://www.xcmap.net/>). This task-based competition came into its own in 2020 and the results will be reported soon.

After months of sunshine, June saw a more typical mix of UK weather. There were however a couple of days of note, with the 2nd in particular being one of those rare Dales days with an unusually high cloud base. Many converged on Dodd, and with no one going cross-country, flights were limited to the grid challenge (another NCT task) or small to medium sized triangles that one could walk back from if necessary. With a base of 2200m (7200' for the oldies) and a convergence line coming in later on, the worries over hiking back were unfounded as several 25-30km triangles were completed. If only we were allowed and could safely be retrieved from cross country flights!

The XC league belatedly restarted on the 24th July, unfortunately not in time to record Chris Fountain, Jake Herbert and Pete Logan's epic 170km site record from Carlton Bank across the Humber and down into Lincolnshire on the 19th. Pete Darwood liked the look of Market Rasen too much and hence only bagged 141km. Two days later the same collective also managed 45km from Dodd in somewhat less easy conditions, but alas another non-counter.

The next counting flight over 20km from the Dales did not happen until the 8th August when Rosie D did a couple of hops from a beautiful Swarth Fell and Chris Kay did a similar from Ingleborough, whilst the rest of the Dales were completely shrouded in fog. However, Monday 24th August saw the big Dales of the year as John Ellison and Jake pulled out an absolute blinder from Dodd and got to

the east coast; an open distance of 163km and a turnpoint distance of 168km. Ed Cleasby also had a great flight with 76km from Mallerstang, whilst another notable performance was from **Rahul Basu** with his best UK XC to date at 26km going a considerable way to earning him a 100km Dales XC mug for 2020 – one of only two mugs to be awarded this year. The other mug was attained by **Joseph Edmonds** who on the last day of August flew a solo 25km from Hawkswick to land near Bainbridge in Wensleydale.

With spring effectively missed from the XC league perspective, there was all to play for in September and it did not disappoint with a sextet of pilots getting between 50 and 60km from Windbank on the 1st day. Then on the 2nd to last day of the month, Ed surfed a lovely looking cloud street from Whernside landing near Ripon whilst Dave Smart, Jake, Richard Meek and Robin Cruickshank took a more circuitous route from Wether to Darlington.

With that brief and incomplete summary of the Dales 2020 cross country season aside, what are the scores on the doors? Despite all the best efforts of the virus, **there were 84 flights from 21 pilots entered in our league and thanks to Jake and John's epic flight we positioned second best club in the country with Jake, Richard, John and Ed all achieving top twenty positions nationally.**

498 flights 14,969.7 points 123 pilots

League: **National** Show: **Club Flights** Go Year: **2020** Scoring: **Standard**

Top 4 pilots score for each club. Click Show Other Pilots to expand club tables.

Club	Total	
1 XCient	1620.9	Show Other Pilots (3)
1 Alex Colman	868.8	232.5 213.4 210.2 25.1 67.1 47.4
2 Tom Cole	323.6	139.2 77.7 66.7
3 Robert Kingdon	260.0	114.3 77.8 26.3 75.7 25.7 20.6
4 Charles Norwood	168.5	105.6 62.9
2 Dales	1080.7	Hide Other Pilots (10)
1 Jake Harbert	356.1	168.2 100.8 55.4 26.7
2 Richard Meek	260.8	58.6 24.9 49.8 40.3 35.3 20.8
3 John Willson	246.9	155.2 48.0 16.3 14.4
4 Ed Cleasby	216.9	76.5 63.1 21.3 20.5 18.7 16.8
Non-scoring Pilots		
5 Pete Darwood	207.1	81.8 43.7 24.0 26.7 23.7 20.6
6 Chris Kay	184.0	28.8 26.8 26.1 28.0 24.5 22.8
7 Rahul Basu	110.8	25.2 25.2 18.7 16.5 17.6 11.6
8 Kevin McLoughlin	103.4	28.3 23.4 20.1 18.3 16.1
9 Rosie Darwood	84.4	28.3 26.3 16.0 11.8
10 Martin Baxter	49.2	20.2 15.5 12.5
11 Joseph Edmonds	40.9	20.6 15.3
12 Simon Tomlinson	22.1	13.7 10.5
13 Mark Morrison	17.8	17.8
14 Gary Senior	12.2	12.2

In terms of the local and more representative picture, Dales has five pilots in the top ten of the northern XC league (<https://www.northernxcleague.com/home>), with Jake winning it for the second year in a row and Chris Kay only missing a top ten spot by 300m.

NORTHERN XC LEAGUE 2019/20 - FINAL STANDINGS 2019/2020									
	Name	Club	Flight 1	Flight 2	Flight 3	Flight 4	Flight 5	Flight 6	TOTAL
1	Jake Herbert	Dales	168.2	105.8	26.7	55.4			356.10
2	David Smart	North Yorks	76.4	56.4	56.3	29.3	28.4	19.5	266.30
3	Phil Wallbank	Pennine	110.7	39.1	38.3	28.8	18.4	16.8	252.10
4	Richard Meek	Dales	58.6	54.9	40.3	35.3	30.9	27.1	247.10
5	John Ellison	Dales	168.2	48.0	16.3	14.4			246.90
6	Gary Stenhouse	Northumbria	65.5	63.3	35.7	32.0	25.3	22.6	244.40
7	Ed Cleasby	Dales	76.5	63.1	21.3	20.5	18.7	16.8	216.90
8	Pete Darwood	Dales	61.8	43.7	34.0	24.7	22.3	20.6	207.10
9	Phil Kew	Cumbria	56.1	50.4	32.7	30.0	15.5	12.9	197.60
10	Jacob Cleverley	Pennine	45.1	32.8	30.8	29.9	27.5	16.8	182.90

So that is it from the XC league side of things for 2020. Huge congratulations to all for surviving this strange season, acquitting yourselves well in terms of lack of post-lockdown accidents and doing the Dales club proud in the local and national leagues.

Finally, it is worth noting that the Dales were once again the second biggest club in terms of the number of pilots entering the league; another great achievement and promising sign for the future.

Pete Darwood
Competition secretary

Memories Of Hang Gliding Early Days

(Submitted by Pete Fisher, article referred to was by Mike Shaw)

While flicking through [Skywords Feb, 2007](#) the following paragraph caught my eye and made me smile. I was there, so I can add a bit to Mike's story!

"John, a friend who now microlights, tells me he heard many years ago of a learner who was getting practice on the West face of Baildon. This learner inadvertently landed on top of a parked furniture van, much to the consternation of the driver. John didn't know quite how they managed to get him down!"

I don't know who he was, but as I recall he was a novice flying something that was capable of clearing the road by a few feet (so maybe not a standard Rogallo).

I was flying a Wills SST100B. I had landed about 50 yards past the road, and was carrying it back up. I think it was some time in 1978, that's when I bought my SST from Trevor Birkbeck and sold my Skyhook 3A standard... Here is my recollection of what happened.

He was flying a straight top to bottom when the furniture van appeared from the left (North) and stopped to watch the action, directly in his flight path. He appeared to hesitate and consider turning one way or the other, then appeared to push out a bit to get over the van. However, he was flying seated and the control bar missed the van, but his legs hit the side. The glider perched perfectly on top of the van, nose down, leaving him dangling down the side. Had he been prone he might have made it. As I recall it took the effort of several other pilots and spectators to get him and his glider down. I think both he and the glider were relatively unharmed, maybe just a bruised pride!

I've also attached a photo of me learning in 1977 with Don Greenbank (red flying suit), John Turner (front wires) and Tony Greenbank (right). I think the van parked roughly in line with where I am in the photo.

Don was a wonderful and kind guy, as Mike mentioned in his article. He was a professional spiritual healer. Happier days!

Hope this is of interest to somebody in the club, or maybe somebody is old enough to have been there and remembers it differently to me! (I was 19 at the time).

Pete Fisher



Annual General Meeting

Due to the Covid 19 situation, this year AGM business will be conducted **only** on the DHPC members only forum.

(No Member proposals where received within the deadline of 1st November)

**Deadline for voting is
Thursday 3rd December 2020**

Committee reports follow and can also be found on the forum

Committee Reports 2019-20

Chairmans Report

Committee

I'm pleased to say that the committee didn't suffer any casualties during the year.

Two committee members gave me plenty of notice of their intention to stand down at the AGM, allowing me to find suitable replacements. The details are available on the [club forum](#).

COVID-19

Without doubt, this has been the biggest challenge of the year, indeed the biggest challenge I have faced during my 11-year tenure as Chairman. The easy bit was lockdown itself when both CAA and BHPA restrictions were imposed. We closed our sites on 23 Mar and didn't start opening them again until 14 May. A big thank you to all those members who showed restraint and complied with our request.

The difficult decisions came before and after the formal restrictions. We had to balance the (often conflicting) wishes of club members and neighbouring clubs against those of the local community and the emergency services (particularly mountain rescue) at a time when everybody, including Government departments, was struggling to interpret the Prime Minister's direction. In the end I hope that we got it about right.

When we returned to flying individual pilots were encouraged interpret the restrictions as they saw fit. Some chose to fly closed circuit tasks, whilst others flew open XC and accepted the consequences of a more difficult retrieve.

One good thing came out COVID-19. The sites officers consulted the farmers at each key stage and, whilst opinions varied, they all appreciated being asked. This helped to cement our good relations, and both sites officers are to be commended for their efforts.

AGM

The COVID-19 restrictions have prevented us from holding a face to face AGM. The committee did discuss holding a remote (Zoom) meeting but, due to a number of restrictions, agreed to use the members only forum instead.

BHPA Sites Officer

I continue to sit on the BHPA Executive Committee. I don't think this represents a conflict of interests (quite the contrary) but I feel that I should declare it here.

Martin Baxter
Chairman

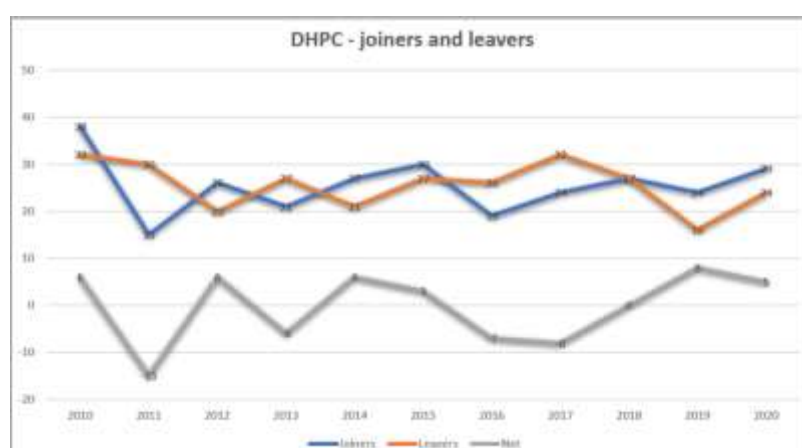
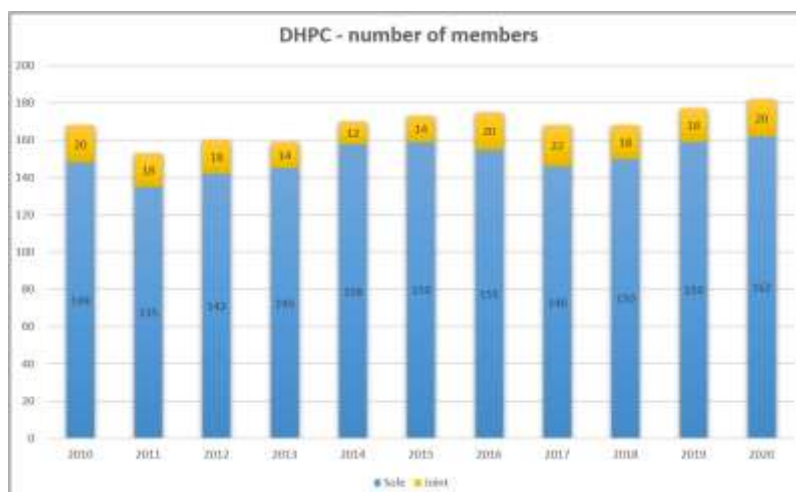
Membership

2020 Highlights

- Despite the best efforts of COVID-19 our membership numbers have increased again this year to a new record of 182 paid up members. We would like to thank you all for your continued commitment and support!
- We welcomed 29 new members this year, a mix of newly-qualified pilots graduating from school and more experienced pilots.
- Virtually everyone paid their subscription electronically this year, with just one person paying by cheque. Paying electronically eases administration and reduces our running costs.
- 72 members (47%) renewed before the membership expiry date of 1st Feb, and a total of 127 members (82%) had renewed by the end of February to take advantage of the 10% discount for prompt electronic payment.

Other membership news

We have introduced a new online system for membership management. Members now have access to their own Member Page to view and update their membership details, and new joiners can now complete and submit their application form online – see the November edition of Skywords for more details. We will use this new system to manage the membership renewal process next year.



Last year we made the DHPC forum members-only, which means members need to register an account in order to view and participate in discussions on the forum. This year the number of members with a forum account has increased 8% to 131 (representing 72% of the membership).

The club's "DHPC Flying Plans" WhatsApp group passed the 100 participants milestone this year, and there are currently 111 people – both members and non-members – in the group.

Tim Rogers
Membership Secretary

Secretary

“May you live in interesting times”

Did anything happen this year? We had our last face to face committee meeting in January! Having found a pretty ideal pub for these meetings (Red Lion, Burley), we have never been back. However, we have taken to remote zoom meetings like virtually the entire world, and now have a club zoom account (having shamelessly piggy backed on Tom's account for a few months). So even if we get back to the possibility of having face to face meetings, at least some meetings will be remote – a positive upshot of the current turmoil caused by CV19.

Despite the virus I have continued to get the usual queries via the website, around 1 or 2 a week - along with the spam, we always get requests for training, tandem flights etc- even one recently asking permission for someone to come and fly a drone with us on one of flying days! (er, thanks, but no thanks).

An interesting year for the committee, which I am sure will feature in other members' reports, thankfully the club has so far come through in a strong and healthy position.

**Secretary
Tam**

Safety Officer's Report: 2020

Not surprising due to the lack of flying because of Covid there was only 1 accident either involving DHPC members or on DHPC sites in 2020. Thankfully the pilot will make a good recovery. There were a number of incidents – a low level collapse on Gregareth, an accidental reserve deployment and a ground handling incident..

Thank you to all who attended the accident scene and also 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.

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

Chief Coach Annual Report 2020

In January David May and Peter Balmforth hosted 3 classroom sessions in preparation for the pilot exam at the Red Lion in Burley in Wharfedale (Editor: Many thanks to both of you). The sessions were very well attended. A fourth exam session was used by six of the club pilots to take their pilot exams. We had dispensation from the BHPA to take the exams without most of the pilot tasks being completed. All six passed. 4 have completed their tasks. A further 2 took exams with David in September. In conclusion we would like to congratulate the following for attaining new ratings:

- Graham McAnany (pilot)
- Carl Maughan (pilot)
- Jason Perry (pilot)
- Carl Scragg (pilot)
- Peter Logan (advanced pilot)
- Chris Baird (pilot)

In February Cleasby Ed and Chris Kay ran a sites crawl of western and central dales. This was well attended and very informative.

Shortly after this COVID hit and coaching/flying shut down for a while and the weekend weather remained poor. Several coaching days were planned but cancelled due to marginal forecasts.

In April, Ed ran a Zoom session on “Paragliding, the perils of strong wind and how to mitigate the dangers”. Ed was excellent as usual, despite having a large and mostly faceless audience.

Charles McDonald joined the coaching team this year and has already been busy witnessing tasks.

Ed Cleasby ran a coaching day on 30th July (mid-week) on Staggs Fell and Peter Balmforth ran another on 8th August on Cautley Craggs, although weekend weather continued to hamper.

Although we started planning a club coach course for the autumn, it was decided to push it back to February 2021. This is currently being organised by Rahul Basu and Martin Baxter. Unfortunately COVID-19 might force us to move it again.

Peter Balmforth
Chief Coach

Sites North Report 2020

Stags Fell – We managed to negotiate a relaxation of the “12 in the air at any one time” rule. There is now no limit imposed on the site. A new sign explaining the site rules has been installed at the bottom of the track. The owners main concern is still that nobody lands on the open moor.

Wether Fell – We are proposing to replace the old (now defunct) Wendy Windblows weather station with a new up to date system. For more details please see the separate report.

Other Sites – Business as usual.

New Wind Rose – We have updated the sites wind rose to include degrees of the compass. This now ties in with the optimum wind direction for each site shown in degrees as well. You may have also noticed that some optimum directions have changed slightly after input from experience flyers.

Site Closures – As you all know, we had to close all our flying sites during the COVID lock down earlier in the year. When the restrictions were lifted, we contacted all farmers & land owners concerned to get their approval to open up the sites for flying again. I was pleasantly surprised by the positive support we got from them. We only had Whernside & Brantside where we had to delay the opening at the farmers request. As we speak, it looks like we will have to review the situation again to abide by government & BHPA requirements – lets see how we go.

Farmers Dinner – This proved very popular again this year. The planned 2021 dinner has reluctantly had to be cancelled due to the ongoing COVID situation.

Booze Run (Not) – We have decided that dropping off drinks etc. around all the farms is not a good idea this year. Instead we will be sending out vouchers with the Christmas cards. A letter explaining our reasoning & future plans will be included as well.

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

Simon Tomlinson
Sites North

Sites South Report 2020

My last job of 2019 as Sites South Officer was the Christmas Drinks run. Usually achievable in the one day, it ended up being completed over two days due to the road between Malham and Arncliffe becoming unpassable due to snow and ice. Good progress was being made climbing out of Malham in sun but as I passed the Tarn the sky became white and snow began to fall. On the higher ground the snow had been laying thickly for some time, the road had been kept clear as far as Darnbrook Farm but no one had attempted the climb as Brootes Lane climbs steeply up Nab End. The gate across the road was firmly closed. Day two saw all the drinks safely delivered.

The farmers dinner was again felt to be a great success, enjoyed by all who could make it.

And then Covid came along!!

In mid-May the decision to begin opening sites in consultation with the farmers began. This was a great opportunity to speak with some of the farmers I'd not previously had contact with (Christmas drinks more often than not are just left at the door). Most farmers were happy for us to resume flying, the fact that we talked to them and listened to their concerns certainly bought us goodwill. A number of them commented how much they enjoy watching us fly and can only imagine what wonderful views we have of their homes.

In May I finally found out how to edit the website!! (I went to Art School in the 70's and threw paint around) It's quite simple really! And put my new found skill to good use deleting the reference to the strengthened bit of dry stone wall on the route up Windbank. Climbing drystone walls isn't a good look.

In June I was made aware by one of our DHPC members that the Site Guide for Nonte Sarah's was outdated. In consultation with PSC the new information provided by our member was verified and the site guide updated.

Potential problems with parking in Hawkswick village had been brought to my attention, and so I took the opportunity to take a closer look whilst on a lovely cycle ride up Littondale as far as Foxup. After three laps of the village I still couldn't find the small car park with the honesty box so decided to ask one of the villagers. It turns out the house with adjoining car park was sold a couple of years ago and the land made private. With most of the houses sporting "no parking" signs on the verges it seems the only viable parking in the area is on the south side of the river over the bridge.

Shaun Pickard
Sites South

Library

The first task for this year was to get some clarity on who had which books and to try to recover books that were possibly lost. This was achieved on the most part, though there are still a couple of things that I never did manage to track down. As the previous year's library budget had not been used, I managed to coax a double budget from the committee to allow me to replenish the library with items that were missing and also managed to negotiate a meagre discount from flybubble for placing a single large order.

We now have a simple library spreadsheet managed in Google Sheets which gives us the benefit of having a single source of truth for the current library situation. It also allows me to present a reduced set of data as a publicly accessible sheet which you can see on the website - so any member can easily see what books are in the library and also if they are currently out on loan or not.

You can see this data on the library page [here](#)

When I first joined the DHPC the library was the best thing about the club. I'll admit to being a bit of a bookworm and so perhaps I'm biased, but for me it was great. The price of these books if you were to go out and buy them all is eye watering. Instead being able to borrow and devour them really allowed me to take on as much paragliding knowledge as I could. I think it's a great resource and I really encourage members to take full advantage.

Unfortunately COVID meant that the traditional way of borrowing and returning books at club nights was removed. The first very strict lockdown basically closed the library down as well. This time around though I am certainly happy to discuss the best ways to dish out books to members and **would encourage you to get in touch if there is something you would like to borrow**. My preferred way for you to get in touch is either via Whatsapp (find me on flying plans), send me a PM via the forum.

Currently we have two still shrink wrapped copies of "The Beginners Guide" which I'm going to read myself, I suspect by the end of COVID it might be one that we could all do with having a read through to remind us what Paragliding is all about

Joseph Edmonds
Librarian

Website

Background from Chairman

In 2010, after the DHPC website had fallen into disrepair, the committee unanimously decided to opt for a paid service. It was agreed to pay Alex £400 to migrate the service onto his server, and then to pay him an annual fee to host the website. (There is also a small fee to retain our domain name.) It was also made clear at the time that, whilst 'hosting' included maintenance of the service and providing advice and some training; 'projects' would attract an additional charge. We subsequently paid him £250 to bring the sites guide onto the website.

It was Alex's idea to base the website on a Content Management System allowing committee members to maintain most of the pages themselves. He didn't charge for the additional Events (now removed) and Coaching pages that were added later. He also edits the mapping in the sites guides for free.

Alex maintains the website either as part of the annual hosting fee or on a voluntary basis. Projects, such as this, attract a cost which Alex will always make clear in advance. His prices are very competitive.

From Alex

My involvement with the website has been minimal this year. A couple of forum upgrades (nothing to see, only code improvements from the software publishers) and a few email issues. I also did a few updates that committee members were unable to do themselves.

The committee has recently approved my proposal to update the website template design over the winter months. The current one is probably about 10 years old and is using outdated techniques. It's all a bit 'small' and not designed for larger screen sizes, mobile phones and tablet devices that we have nowadays.

A new design would be 'responsive', which in simple terms means that it will resize to fit the device screen that you're viewing it on. The current website does not resize at all which means on a mobile phone for example, you have to zoom in to read anything, and the links and buttons are very small and tricky to tap on. A new template would also have a more modern look/feel. The forum would not be part of this update.

I estimate this will take me a couple of days to complete for which I will charge £420 + VAT; less if I complete the job sooner, but no more if I run over.

Alex Colbeck
Website

DHPC Themed Clothing

Don't forget that you can buy DHPC themed clothing online. The club holds no stock of these items, and makes no profit from their sale, but you can show your love of the sport when you are out and about, for very little cost.

Polo / Sweat shirts

A huge range of colours available, and a choice between highly wickable polyester based fabric, or cotton. These come with an embroidered logo on the front, and you can chose to have Steve Ham's brilliant transfer design on the back or not. Cotton T shirts are also available.

Order from: https://www.conistonshop.com/shop/index.php?product_cat=635



DHPC Buffs

https://giraffeuk.com/search.php?search_query=dales



Made with 100% Coolmax Microfiber these are available at £14.99 each. A choice of 2 designs – either the club logo, or the “Skywords quotes” one, featuring many quotes from members’ tales in Skywords over the years.

New (Old) Skywords

We recently received some electronic back copies of Skywords that were missing from the archive in the library, courtesy of ex editor Craig Richardson. A fascinating read they are too. So much has changed, and so much hasn't. So if you want to see what it was like 15 years ago and how our sport was developing, the new copies in the archive are: April, June, August and December 2005, and January 2006.

Trev was Chairman (of course), Hang Gliding still dominated (reports of a loop the loop in Florida), XC for paragliders was starting to gain momentum, with the formation of a Dales XC club lead by John Ellison, and smutty jokes were in. The XC league was of course still headed by Jake – with the only entry, on 9.8km (it was only April!).

25

2005 Dales Paragliding League <i>AeroFix</i>								
Pos	Pilot	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
1	Jake Herbert	9.8						9.8
2								
3								
4								

2005 Dales Hang Gliding League <i>fun 2 fly</i>								
Pos	Pilot	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
1	Trev Birkbeck	40.6	38.1					78.7
2	Kevin Gay	46.7	8.4	5.4				60.5
3	Steve Mann	34.5						34.5
4								

If you have any old copies of Skywords (electronic or hard copy) that are not included in the archive (<https://www.dhpc.org.uk/library/skywords-archive>) , it would be great if we could get hold of them – just email them to Tam (secretary@dhpc.org.uk).

Picture Corner

(from Gary Senior)

16th October 2020 - Flying from Reighton in Filey Bay to the big cliffs at Speeton and Bempton. The other pilot in the pics is Simon Tomlinson, we reached 1350 feet above MSL.

