



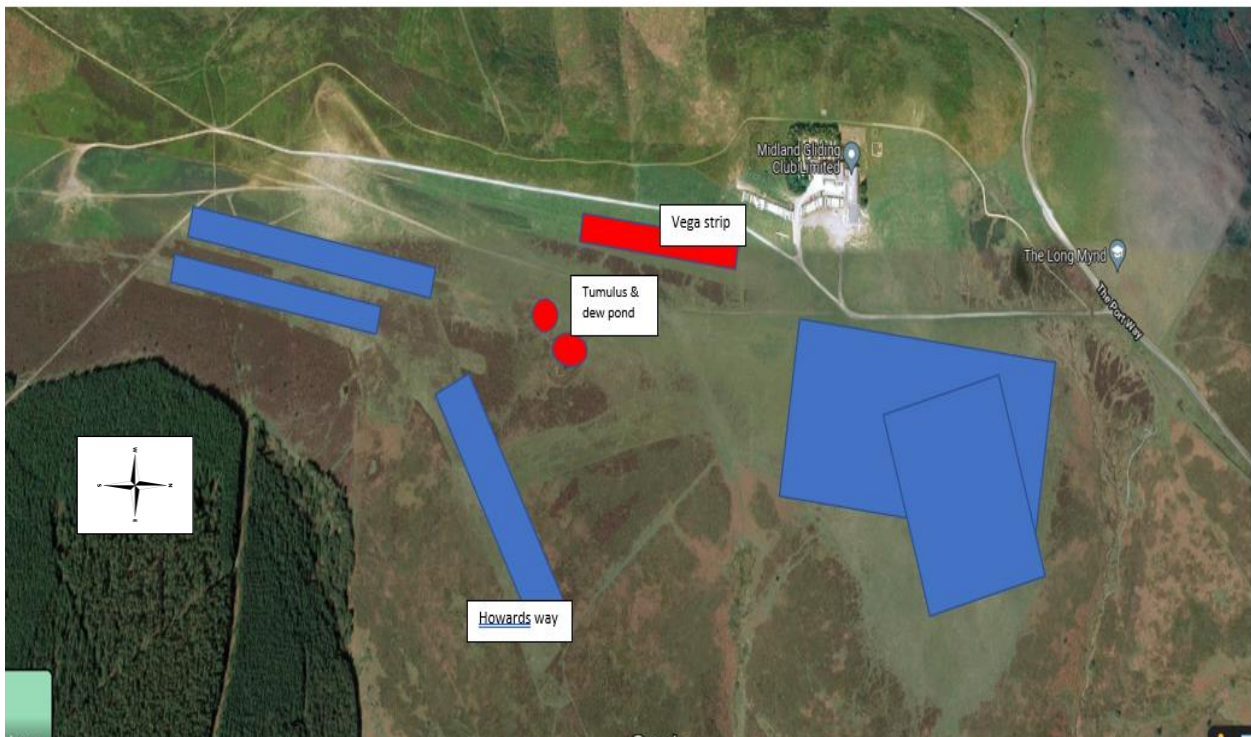
These notes are intended to help brief you on flying at our site. They are not intended as a substitute for formal training or a detailed instructor/site briefing. You should have read the standard operating procedures before flying.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Midland Gliding Club (MGC) is a large airfield sat on the Long Mynd, situated in the beautiful Shropshire hills, with extensive views of the Welsh Marches, and on a clear day, right across to Snowdonia. We get excellent thermal, ridge and wave offering soaring potential through the year. Our members have carried out flights more than 750 km and reached over 20,000 ft in wave. We launch by winch 7 days a week, April-Sept and weekends and ad hoc weekdays Oct-March. There is on-site trailer parking, a caravan site, purpose-built clubhouse, café, famous historic hangar and modern workshop. There are approximately 50 gliders based on the site. We are blessed with relatively little airspace in the local vicinity but, as always, the Pilot in Charge (PIC) is responsible for checking both airspace and NOTAMS.

2. THE SITE

The airfield is a large grass field with various slopes along its length and width, situated on top of the Long Mynd at approx. 1400 ft above sea level. In particular, this means that when on the ground aircraft, vehicles and people can become invisible due to the field undulations. Please note, that due to the natural nature of the site, the airfield surface is rough in places, although, in theory, the whole of the airfield is landable except for the Dew Pond and Tumulus marked on the site map. However, there are also preferred landing areas which are also marked in blue and, which, you will receive day-specific information at the morning briefing held on each flying day, usually in the clubhouse meeting room/bar area or in the front of the hangar.



When landing to the West, there is a slight uphill slope, but a wide area is available.



Landing in a Southerly direction gives the longest landing run but beware of a downhill component if you land beyond the retrieve winch.

When we launch to the North, we use two strips cut into the heather. These strips are shorter, downhill, and more challenging, so you should have a check flight if landing in the Northerly direction, for the first time, unless the Duty Instructor (DI) has specifically agreed otherwise. Beware the Tumulus and Dew Pond if overshooting on these strips but there is an option to taxi off up Howards Way, if necessary.

The Vega strip is NOT recommended for visitor use.

You must be aware that there are two footpaths that cross the thresholds of these runways and cyclists in particular can suddenly appear out of the wooded area. Therefore, make sure you come in on a steep approach, to stay well above head height until you are past the footpaths. (You may find it helpful to aim for the lighter green section (bottom of and crossing the first slope).

3. GLIDING OPERATIONS/LAUNCHING

MGC uses a retrieve winch system, with which, you may not be familiar. The important point is that there is a cable running or lying between the main winch and the retrieve winch at all times. There is a movable protective yellow fence in front of the retrieve winch to protect you from the cable suddenly recoiling back if it breaks. **DO NOT** approach the cable until it has come to a halt and **DO NOT** attempt to move the cable unless you are certain that the cable is “dead” If in doubt, check with the retrieve winch driver.

You should also be aware that the cable may well drop well to the left or right of the cable rune if we are operating in a cross wind.

You may not drive the retrieve winch unless you have received appropriate training to do so. There is a video that explains how to operate it if you are going to be at the club for more than a few days and are interested to learn.

Please note: because of the retrieve cable, our normal practice is to start lowering the nose as the power comes off at the top of the launch and **WAIT FOR THE CABLE TO BACK RELEASE.**

4. LANDING

You will be briefed on the circuit direction at the morning briefing. However, please be aware that gliders may approach from unusual directions, especially after medium height cable breaks, and may undertake both left- and right-hand circuits, or approach straight-in at low level on “final glide” from cross country flights. Please keep a good look out when walking or driving across any part of the active airfield.

You are requested to give a downwind radio call on 123.815 wherever possible.



e.g. *Long Mynd – Glider XX – downwind right hand to land to the west.*

Normally circuits are right hand when landing to the West. When launching to the South or North they will usually be on the upwind side of the airfield.

5. CABLE BREAK OPTIONS

Ask for a brief specific to the day.

Launching to the South – straight ahead onto the two strips mentioned above where possible, but do not overshoot the left-hand strip, as you are likely to break your glider. Beware the Tumulus on the undershoot.

If too high to go straight ahead, a modified circuit to the left is usual with the option to land across the field if need be.

Launching to the North – land straight ahead where possible

- 180 degree turn and land back up the field if winds are light
- 270 to the right and land across the field
- Modified circuit and land down the field if enough height

6. LANDING OUT AT THE LONG MYND

Gliders are welcome to land at MGC at any time, subject to the Pilot's discretion. In light winds circuits can be from either side. With the ridge to the West side and an undulating East face, in any significant wind it is essential to do circuits on the upwind side of the field. If you do a circuit on the downwind side, you may experience very strong sink on the downwind leg. Please do not cross the field below 2,000ft QFE, as winch launches can be to this height.

7. VISITING POWERED AIRCRAFT

MGC is strictly PPR (Prior Permission Required) – please see separate briefing notes.

8. HAZARDS

Beware the curl over when the wind has a strong Easterly or Westerly component and modify your circuit to give you plenty of height for your final turn. We rarely fly in significant Easterly winds, but if you think the curl over on the West side is bad, the curl over in a strong Easterly is eye-watering!

As we are on the top of the hill, cloud base can suddenly drop quite dramatically in the winter, so don't get caught out on the ridge with a rapidly lowering cloud base.

Landing into sun: flying late into the afternoon/evening on the ridge can be beautiful but be aware you may well be landing into the sun. Always keep a good look out and especially while ridge soaring in a Southerly direction in the autumn and winter, when the sun can be very low and directly in your line of sight.



We love the Mynd but so do walkers, cyclists, horses, and sheep. Any of them can be anywhere on the airfield, so keep a good look out at the launch point and a very good look out when landing. Sheep can jump to a surprising height vertically, so don't overfly them if you can help it and please help to keep the landing area clear of them, if you are at the launch point.

9. DRIVING ON THE AIRFIELD

The airfield height and the sheep make it a harsh environment for the grass and in winter it can be very wet. Keep vehicle movements on the airfield to a minimum (to avoid damaging the grass), keep a good lookout and keep your speed down.

10. ACCESS TO THE MYND

See guidance on the website. Don't try driving up to the airfield in the winter unless you are sure the roads are not icy.

11. RIDGE FLYING AT LONG MYND

Standard ridge soaring rules are as follows:

- Always turn away from the ridge
- Always overtake between the glider and the ridge, so you know that the glider you are overtaking will not turn into the ridge
- If you are head on to another glider, the glider with the ridge on the left gives way (the glider with the ridge on the right cannot turn right, as it would be turning into the ridge)

In addition to this we operate a lane system:

Aircraft on a **Northerly** heading fly closer to the ridge (i.e. maintain a track to the East of the line of the road at the foot of the hill)

Aircraft on a **Southerly** heading fly further out (i.e. maintain a track to the West of the same line)
This means you must turn away from the ridge at the South end to turn back onto the ridge.

The line that divides the traffic lanes is the road at the foot of the ridge, where there is moorland on one side and fields on the other. In case you're still not sure, have a look at the map on the last page and remember that your left wingtip must never go over this line, ensuring that you can't collide with anyone who is also following the rules.

The reason for the traffic lane system is that the glider heading South is on the outside of the ridge so can give way easily without cutting across other traffic. If you are sinking slowly and worry that there will be less lift on the Westerly run to the South, **then land before you get too low.**

Remember that you MUST turn away from the ridge to start your circuit and any judgement of a safe height to start the circuit must take that into account. It is NOT acceptable to decide that you are too low to conduct a safety turn away from the ridge and as a result turn towards the ridge onto your circuit.

If you are not cleared for or comfortable with field landings then don't go below a safe height to start a circuit, (600 ft generally). If you do go below a safe height to start a circuit, have your fields picked.



If you turn in thermal lift low down on the ridge you must keep a good lookout as you turn and, if there is anyone on the ridge behind you, you must not continue thermalling but fly back down the ridge or you may put them in a very difficult position.

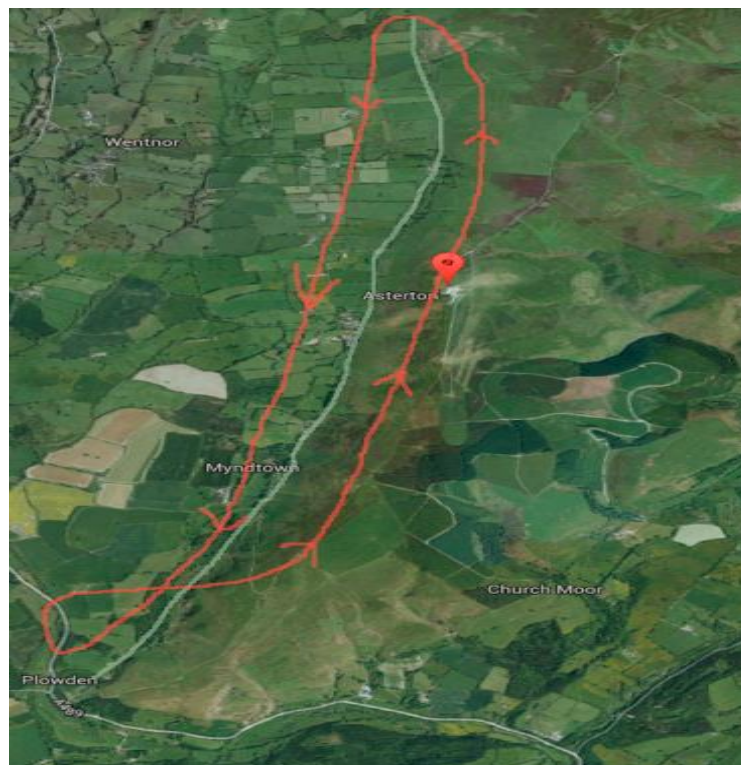
Do not fly close to cloud base i.e. in the “wispsies”. All aircraft are flying up and down the same band of lift, and if in cloud, you will be unable to see people coming the other way, and vice versa. If you think you need to be that high to get a circuit in, it’s not safe to fly, so please land.

Any pilot soaring the ridge at a low level **shall not** fly in a way which conflicts with flying operations of hang gliders, parascenders and model aircraft, which also share the ridge with MGC.

- Keep well clear of the areas in which any hang gliders and/or model gliders are operating
- Keep well clear of the area in front of the bungee point so as not to conflict with gliders being launched and powered aircraft departing
- Do not fly near to persons walking, cycling or horse riding

The Civil Aviation Authority permits, under an exemption to ‘SERA.3105 Minimum Heights’ and SERA.5005(f) ‘VFR Flight Minimum Height’, a glider to fly below 150 metres (500 feet) above the ground or water or closer than 150 metres (500 feet) to any person, vessel, vehicle or structure if it is hill-soaring. In doing so, pilots must comply with ‘SERA.3101 Negligent or Reckless Operation of Aircraft’, which states that an aircraft shall not be operated in a negligent or reckless manner so as to endanger life or property of others.

This exemption is effectively a privilege that is dependent upon all pilots taking a responsible attitude to maintaining safety. At the Mynd, there is a risk from flying low over walkers and horse riders in particular, and pilots must be mindful of their responsibilities towards other users of the ridge.



Midland Gliding Club – The Long Mynd

Airfield/Flying notes for Visiting Glider Pilots



Finally, we hope to be a welcoming club and, if there are any questions, please ask the Duty Instructor. If you have any suggestions for improvements, please email the Chairman at chairman@midlandgliding.club

Rose Johnson

Chief Flying Instructor
Midland Gliding Club
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