

1) General

This guide gives details of sites that are controlled by the Wessex Hang Gliding and Paragliding Club.

Additional restrictions and rule changes may be imposed at very short notice and will be published on the Wessex Web Site – <http://www.wessexhgpg.org.uk> – and in the Club Magazine, 'Airmail'. Urgent information will also be sent to Reciprocal Clubs to be disseminated to their members.

Revision numbers and dates are given at the bottom of each site. Long term changes will eventually be incorporated in a new version of the particular site guide; please keep up to date with the latest version.

Some sites may be restricted to Full Wessex Members Only. This has either been requested by the landowner or has been imposed by the Club due to site sensitivity. Please respect the rules - once a site is lost it is very difficult to regain

PLEASE HELP US TO HELP YOU TO ENJOY YOUR FLYING

Reciprocal Clubs

We operate under a 'reciprocal agreement' with all neighbouring clubs. Wessex sites do not cater for all wind directions; in particular winds in the sector from NE round to SE and inland Southerly sites are a problem. Fortunately, some of our neighbouring clubs come to the rescue. Please make sure you know the latest site rules before flying any reciprocal club sites.

See 'Skywings!' or the Wessex Web Site (<http://www.wessexhgpg.org.uk>) for a list of reciprocal club's sites officers. Important site news in respect of these clubs is often published on the Wessex website.

2) SAFETY

The club operates successfully as both a Hang Gliding and Paragliding Club. To enable us to continue this coexistence there are several common sense steps we can take:

- a) Communication is vital. Share experiences and listen to the needs of others. Be aware of the different flying characteristics of each aircraft type, even better - have a go, under the supervision of a school.
- b) Paragliders should:
 - i) Avoid setting up and taking off directly in front of hang-gliders as there is a risk of momentarily losing control and being blown backwards into their wing(s).
 - ii) Refrain from 'kiting' up the hill whenever there is a possibility that hang-gliders may launch - for obvious reasons.
 - iii) Be considerate if conditions are 'scratchy' and side-land early to give hang-gliders the opportunity of getting in close to stay up. Hang gliders cannot side-land, and it's a long walk back up from the bottom landing field.
- c) Hang gliders should:
 - i) Be aware of a paragliders slower flying speed. In stronger winds paragliders may get pinned and will need to sit facing into wind.
 - ii) Avoid passing close above or below paragliders in thermic conditions as vertical movement can be exaggerated. Remember, hang gliders usually come off worse in the event of a collision.

3) ACCIDENT PROCEDURE

If you are unfortunate enough to have any accident on our sites, however slight, please report it to the Safety Officer or a committee member - just a phone call will do.

This also applies if, for any reason, you cause damage on a site, whether it be to the site itself or the property of a third party.

4) AIR SPACE

Please fly with the latest aeronautical chart (1:500 000) or topographical air chart (1:250 000).

1:500 000 Sheet No. 2171CD S.England and Wales

1:250 000 The West & South Wales

Be aware that this chart does not include airspace above 5,000ft.

If you intend flying cross-country, be aware that we are now effectively excluded from Class D airspace - so you must know the boundaries of Bournemouth and Southampton CTAs and Solent CTR.

Danger Areas

Danger Area D026 (between Lulworth and Kimmeridge on the coast and inland towards Wareham and Wool) is always active mid-week and is sometimes also activated at weekends by NOTAM. (See 1:250,000 chart for details.)

You are only allowed to fly through this danger area when it is not active. To check weekend status phone Plymouth Operations (01752 557 550) and tell them who you are and where you intend to fly.

Remember, flying in an active danger area is seen as 'endangering your aircraft' and the CAA has successfully prosecuted civilian fixed wing pilots for doing so.

Permission to fly through a danger area does not give you permission to land in it. Lulworth Ranges have tonnes of unexploded ordnance lying around. If you do land away from a public area - tread carefully!

Danger Area D015 has been established near Winfrith. It is activated by NOTAM and extends up to 3,600ft.

5) MILITARY LOW FLYING

Our sites see a surprising amount of military flying activity.

Our sites are over-flown, at low level, by helicopters from Yeovilton and by military 'transports' and fast jet traffic. The Winkelbury, Monks Down, Whitesheet area is used for training by helicopters from Middle Wallop.

The CANP (Civil Aircraft Notification Procedure) should be used if five or more gliders are likely to be operating. This does not establish an avoidance area but it does ensure that military pilots will be alerted to your presence. Because it can take up to four hours to get the information out to all the military pilots before they take off, the notification procedure should be started as soon as possible - ideally the evening before.

Use Freephone 0800 515544, or 01780 416001, or e-mail swk-lfoffbc@mod.gov.uk.

Provide the following details:

- 1) Activity. Hang/paragliding (If the site is one of those with a site code then state 'Hang/paragliding Avoidance Area' here.)
- 2) Location: Site grid reference (2 letter 6 figure) and name. (If the site is one of those with a site code then state that first.)
- 3) Area of operation. (With the notification system this is a maximum of 2nm radius. With the avoidance area system it is always 1nm diameter.)
- 4) Date and time flying will start / finish.
- 5) Expected number of gliders.
- 6) Contact telephone number (ideally a mobile that will work on the site).
- 7) Normal contact details (if different to (6)).

You will be given a unique Reference Number to note.

The Low Flying Booking Cell is manned Monday to Thursday 0700-2000 (Local) and Friday 0700-1600 (Local). The LFBC is now closed at weekends. If you use the fax or e-mail contact out-of-hours you will be called back by phone with the Reference Number when the office is next manned and the associated notification has been passed to military pilots. You can only assume that you have avoidance/notification status once you have received this.

If at any stage it becomes clear that the site won't be used you should cancel the booking, quoting the Reference Number. Don't cancel the booking if you have published it on social media - another pilot may be using it.

Remember-this call is for your own safety!

6) COAST GUARD HELICOPTERS

Over the last few years, paraglider pilots flying on the coast have had a few 'close shaves' with the Coastguard Helicopter.

If you are flying on any of our coastal sites (except Barton on Sea and Southbourne which are in controlled airspace) please let the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) on (01305) 760439 know well before flying where you are intending to fly and roughly between what times.

If possible, also let them know when flying on the site has finished for the day.

Remember-this call is for your own safety!

7) COMPTON ABASS AIRFIELD

We have been sharing 'open' airspace with aircraft from Compton Abbas Airfield for over 20 years without incident. However, the airfield is getting busier and aircraft are over-flying the sites we use with increasing regularity (and sometimes with minimal height)

If you are flying from Monk's Down, Winkelbury or Whitesheet and think that you will be exceeding 800ft above the top of the hill, it is a good idea to contact Compton Abbas ATC and let them know that you will be flying. (To exceed 800ft it usually has to be thermic)

Either:

- 1) Phone the airfield before setting off to the hill. You can also ask ATC for a report of wind speed and direction. Telephone number is (01747) 811 767
- 2) Visit the airfield on the way to the hill. You can also use your visit to check the meteorology. There is a weather station at the club house displaying wind speed and direction on a TV screen and also a 'self-briefing' area to the right of the reception desk where you can observe 24hr forecasts, NOTAMS, etc. (The airport has a useful restaurant if it gets blown out!)

For its part, Compton Abbas will be keeping the club informed of days when the airfield will be especially busy ("fly-ins", 'treasure hunts', etc.). Hopefully this will be done far enough in advance so that we can give advanced warnings via Airmail.

Remember - this call is for your own safety!

8) FLYING ON COASTAL SITES

We have recently had a few very near miss sea landings and in the past a fatal one.

Only make a beach landing as a last resort - if you get it wrong the flight may be your last.

Landing in the open sea or in the surf is almost a guarantee of fatality. The unconventional wisdom is that to crash, even downwind and onto rocks, is a safer option than landing in the sea.

Hang-gliders:

If the unthinkable happens, at all costs you must avoid ending up trapped beneath the wing. Either try climb into the A frame, unclip and jump clear when a few feet up or try to get the glider on it's back by flaring hard or cart wheeling.

At best, buoyancy aids offer very little help and, at worst, can be positively dangerous. Always carry a webbing cutter in an accessible place and use twist lock karabiners. Attend a 'ditching' exercise if the opportunity arises. This will allow you to find out the best way to exit from your harness and increase your chance of survival.

Paragliders:

A sea landing is still potentially fatal unless you are wearing a buoyancy aid and there is a safety boat present (as on SIV courses).

If you are forced into a water landing you must:

- a) Get out of your harness as soon as possible. Modern harnesses are very buoyant but will float you face down - you will have to fight for each breath.
- b) Get away from your paraglider to avoid getting tangled up in the lines.
- c) Undo leg straps and cross-bracing while still airborne. IF you can undo chest strap, get out of the harness and jump clear whilst a few feet up. If you can't get out, conventional wisdom dictates that it is best to brake as little as possible as you approach the water, allowing the canopy to fly on and ditch ahead of you at full line stretch. If you stall the wing there is more chance of the lines falling on top of you. Get clear of the harness, canopy and lines as soon as possible.
- d) Don't even think about trying to salvage your wing. A paraglider full of water weighs tons - you won't be able to fight it.

e) If you land on the beach but the canopy lands in the surf, get out of your harness immediately. Your canopy could rapidly fill with water and, with the action of the waves, drag you out to deeper water. Releasing one set of risers will make canopy retrieval easier.

f) Once again, as general precautions carry a webbing cutter in an accessible place, use twist lock karabiners and wear a buoyancy aid. To increase your survival chances, attend a 'ditching' evening if the opportunity arises.

9) LANDING FIELDS

Assume that any landing field identified in this guide is closed if it contains a crop or livestock unless there is definite information to the contrary.

Please remember that long grass is a crop. If all bottom landing fields are cropped the site is effectively closed to hang-glider pilots unless top landing is a certainty.

On some sites where closure of landing fields would effectively close the site, Special Temporary Agreements are sometimes negotiated with the landowner allowing pilots to land in a crop - but this is the exception rather than the rule.

In general, if you are unsure about landing field availability please check with the farmer or a committee member before flying.

10) GATES

Always close and latch any gates that you open.

If you are in doubt as to whether a gate should be closed, be safe and close it anyway. We have almost lost sites in the past when gates have been left open and cattle have escaped.

11) NEW SITES

The club is always looking for, and actively negotiating with landowners for the use of, other hills in the area. Please only fly on the hills in this guide. Often, a new site will only be open on a trial basis to those pilots who negotiated it. If the landowner is happy with their use, it can then be opened to the membership. Please bear in mind that this is usually at the stipulation of the landowner, or is used in a situation where it seems prudent to gently acclimatise the landowner to our presence.

If you have identified a possible new site, or you wish to help negotiate any new sites, please contact the Wessex Sites Officer before doing so to check if there is any "history" connected with the site.

12) MEMBERSHIP

a) Life, Full and Student Members may fly any site in this guide – provided they have met any ratings stipulated for a particular site.

b) Reciprocal Members: - may fly all Wessex Sites in this guide **except** those designated as "Full Wessex Members Only". Sites under negotiation are not included in this guide and are also not open to Reciprocal Members at present.

c) Visitors: - All Wessex Sites in this guide except those designated "Full Wessex Members Only" are open to visitors. A Full or Associate Member must accompany a visitor at all times. Regular visitors are courteously requested to become members. Foreign pilots of IPPI grade SAFE PRO Stage 2 (Hang gliding) or Para Pro Stage 3 (Paragliding) may fly on the provision that they hold third party insurance and must seek a briefing from local pilots.

13) WEBSITE – <http://www.wessexhpgg.org.uk>

Up-to-date changes and notices are available on the club's website.

The Wessex club maintains an informative website. It is regularly updated and as such provides an ideal source for current information and temporary restrictions at a site that cannot be achieved by updates to this Sites Guide.

Permanent changes will also be posted on the site until updates are printed and distributed to members, however it is intended that Acrobat versions of all pages in this Sites Guide will be available for download, and update. Notice of updates to these pages will be emailed to all members on the internet.