

I & C Newsletter Issue 32 October 2025



# Instructor and Coach Newsletter

Dear Instructors, Coaches and Dual Pilots

**Welcome to the latest edition of the BHPA Instructor and Coach newsletter.**

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**Note: The BHPA Technical manual has recently been updated, (amendment 24) the latest version is available online here:**

**[https://www.bhpa.co.uk/documents/index.php?doc=BHPA\\_Tech\\_Manual\\_24.pdf](https://www.bhpa.co.uk/documents/index.php?doc=BHPA_Tech_Manual_24.pdf)**

Articles & suggestions for I & C news can be mailed to: [office@bhpa.co.uk](mailto:office@bhpa.co.uk) ***BHPA Technical department.***

# 1/ Urgent Call to action: CAA Electronic Conspicuity Consultation – Have Your Say (by 6th October 2025).

For many years, BHPA volunteers and staff have worked hard to brief the CAA and Department for Transport about our sports — where we fly, how far we fly, and the thousands of pilots involved across the UK.

Our efforts have already helped change perceptions: free flight is not just “local flying on a hill or around an airfield” but is a widespread and vibrant aviation community flying many miles in varied locations around the UK and abroad. This year, there have been multiple long-distance flights including a new paragliding open distance record. We range far and wide from the hills, winch sites and airfields from which we take off.

The CAA has launched a consultation on the future of Electronic Conspicuity (EC) in UK airspace. This includes the possibility of a **mandatory EC requirement in the airspace in which we fly**. The CAA appears to support ADS-B (which may or may not include CAP 1391 portable “SkyEcho 2” type devices). FLARM and mobile Phone apps do not appear to be acceptable to CAA.

The BHPA’s position is clear: we do not support mandatory ADS-B or transponder carriage for hang gliders, paragliders and their powered variants. Our cockpit-less, lightweight aircraft face unique practical, financial, and safety barriers that make such equipage disproportionate and ineffective. For our sports, being electronically visible should remain voluntary and limited to simple “broadcast out” devices.

**The BHPA wishes to stress that any new rules will affect all pilots, whether hang glider, paraglider, paramotor, powered hang glider or parascender pilots; whether BHPA members or not. It is vital that pilots' voices are heard.**

To support and encourage responses from our community, the BHPA has made a summary of its draft response public, through the BHPA website and on social media. Members can read the consultation papers, see the BHPA position, and submit their own views.

## What can you do as a Club or School?

Apologies for the very short notice, but if you are able to, please take this chance to make sure our voices are heard.

Urgently circulate to your club members the BHPA news item that includes a link to the CAA survey, and a BHPA guide for pilots to make their own survey response, by 6th October 2025. The link is the top news story, here: <https://www.bhpa.co.uk/news/> This includes the link to the consultation document, which you can fill in and submit.

## Response:

If the Club or School you represent would like to make a more in-depth response, you may wish to use the BHPA’s fuller response document as guidance.

The full response is attached to this email and contains the CAA’s survey questions as well as the BHPA expanded response (in blue text).

We suggest that you indicate on the survey form that you represent a hang gliding and paragliding / paramotoring / parascending regional club of [X number] members.

## 2/ Jack Sewell

On the first of September, Jack Sewell joined the BHPA staff as an Assistant Technical Officer. Some of you may well meet Jack in the coming months as he shadows Ian & Mark and get to grips with the challenges of working for the membership.

Here is a brief introduction from Jack.

I grew up in North Wales and had quite outdoorsy parents, spending much of my time in the hills and valleys of Snowdonia national park walking, climbing and mountain biking. That early grounding in the outdoors led me to Swansea University, where I studied Mechanical Engineering and developed a lasting passion for climbing and surfing. After my studies I worked as a pneumatic Engineer before retraining as a teacher. For the past three years I've been teaching Maths and Engineering while continuing to build on a broad background in paragliding, mountaineering, and other outdoor pursuits.

Paragliding has become my main focus in recent years. I trained with Dennis and Gillian Trott in Passy and completed my CP with Brad Nicholas in Snowdonia, where I've since developed my mountain flying and cross-country skills.

Shadowing Brad since April 2024 as a Trainee Instructor and observing at other schools has strengthened my interest in instruction and safe pilot development.

I applied for this post to combine my professional experience in engineering and teaching with my commitment to flying.

My goal is to apply my engineering and teaching background to understanding and improving the systems that underpin the pilot rating scheme. I'm also interested in deepening my understanding of how training standards and rating systems align internationally. I look forward to meeting plenty more of the BHPA community in the UK as I get started with this new role.

## 3/ Pilot & Pilot (Power) exams

The online exams have now been running for some time, and most candidates for the Pilot rating are encouraged to use this system, as it gives immediate results and allows feedback on any questions that have been answered incorrectly. It is also more secure as the questions are easily changed, and the answers are randomised.

For these reasons the online version is the preferred method; however occasionally a member has a particular issue (e.g. a neurodiverse condition) and find it difficult to take exams on a screen, for this reason the "paper" versions of the Pilot and Pilot Power exams have now been updated in line with the online versions, and now also consist of five separate sections (Met, Air law, Flight theory, Human factors & Navigation). The pass mark is 75% for each section.

The new versions have some benefits over the "old" written paper as they are more comprehensive and up to date, and the five-section format allows some flexibility in allowing candidates to take the exam in separate sessions, however, as previously, exam papers and

answer sheets are only provided for a named individual, and must be posted back to BHPA head office for marking; clearly this is less useful in identifying any incorrect answers and helping candidates improve their knowledge.

If a candidate fails to achieve the 75% pass mark in any of these exam papers, they may re-take the online version of any failed section after 7 days, or they can re-take the paper version after three months.

Further information and a revision guide are here:

[https://www.bhpa.co.uk/documents/index.php?doc=Pilot\\_Syllabus.pdf](https://www.bhpa.co.uk/documents/index.php?doc=Pilot_Syllabus.pdf)

If you have any candidates for “Pilot” who have a good reason not to use the online exams, then the new version of the paper exam is available from the BHPA office on request.

## 4/ New members joining via Alternative Entry

The BHPA has always welcomed new members who have trained under another system, usually with a school based overseas. In recent years the number of Alternative Entry applications has increased steadily and in some cases schools and clubs have been faced with flyers on their sites that require guidance on how to become members.

- a) **Foreign pilots on holiday.** These do not usually join the BHPA but are relying on their travel insurance to provide adequate third party and public liability cover, in the same way as UK pilots flying overseas. Some clubs may feel that due to their site agreements they cannot welcome such pilots on some or all of the sites used by their club. Others take a more relaxed view, and provided the pilot holds a suitable qualification and has suitable insurance, that is fine. (IPPI 4 requires 15hrs+ including some thermalling experience, and knowledge of the rules of the air etc, so is a common threshold).
- b) **Pilots visiting for longer periods.** There is an option for visiting Pilots to join the BHPA for three months, provided they have an IPPI 5 (which, at 50hrs + is slightly higher than our “Pilot” level) the association will automatically provide these members with insurance cover.
- c) **Pilots who don't have IPPI 5.** Some flyers wish to join as annual members who are from countries that do not have access to the FAI International pilot proficiency system and do not have a Safe Pro Para (paragliding) Safe Pro Delta (hang gliding) card, or they have been trained by a person or training operation that has no recognised national credentials.  
In this case we require log-book evidence of experience, and each case is assessed individually by a Technical Officer.

Where the IPPI level held is too low, or there is sparse evidence of experience, the prospective member will be directed to a BHPA school, or if they claim adequate experience, they can be practically assessed, they will also be required to pass the BHPA exams, at either Club Pilot or Pilot level.

Assessments can be made by BHPA Instructors, Senior Club Coaches\* or BHPA technical staff.

\*Club coaches may (currently) conduct a practical assessment which must then be ratified by a Technical Officer. The Flying and Safety Committee will be reviewing these requirements in the near future; it has been proposed that only Instructors or Senior coaches should be authorised to conduct these assessments.

This is not a perfect system; schools can sometimes feel that the BHPA accepting members who have trained with someone outside the BHPA or have done some flying in a remote area or where is no local school (a particular issue for hang glider pilots) is undermining their efforts and expense in running a registered school doing things correctly.

The BHPA does not have the power to insist on mandatory training; unlike flying a microlight, there is no state-recognised licence which it is an offence to fly without. We do not own (most of) our flying sites and cannot prevent people from flying.

The association is concerned with supporting the sport and improving safety, and by bringing new members into the fold, we are aiming to make the best of this situation, by ensuring everyone is properly insured and all flyers have access to clubs, coaching and knowledge of site rules etc. Neither clubs nor landowners want uninsured flyers on their sites.

The consequences of a mid-air collision or someone having an accident on someone's land who has no suitable cover could be dire. Bringing flyers into our association makes the sport safer for us all.

## 5/ BHPA Schools: A quick guide to the various categories

Over the years an ecosystem of schools has evolved. All BHPA Schools have at least one Senior instructor acting as the Chief Flying Instructor (CFI). But there are now several different categories. Here is quick review of the types.

**1/ Full school.** The original BHPA school type. These schools are qualified to train ab-initio students (beginners) in one or more **Disciplines** (Hang Gliding, Paragliding or Parascending) and in one or more **Environments**: (Hill, Tow Power).

For example: a Paragliding Hill school can train from complete beginners upwards using a hill or mountain site. A Paragliding Power school can train beginners upwards using paramotors etc.

Most full schools train students up the Club Pilot (Novice) level, -the point at which they are rated to fly with a club, but without instructor supervision. Some go beyond this, and offer "CP Plus" improver courses, and some, (often power schools) offer training courses right through to the BHPA "Pilot" rating level, so that graduates are qualified and insured to fly Cross-country.

*The BHPA provide training courses for all instructors and senior instructors, and detailed guidance to delivering the syllabus for each discipline and environment.*

**2/ Air experience school.** This category of registered school may offer trial flight lessons only. I.e. Air experience flights on a dual hang glider or paraglider with a qualified Air experience Instructor. All such flights must contain an element of tuition, and all students must be members of the BHPA in order to conform to UK aviation law.

Some AE schools may also offer courses training suitably qualified candidates who wish to become dual pilots.

*The BHPA provides a short course required by any dual pilot who wishes to qualify as an Air experience instructor (AEI).*

**3/ Development schools.** A development school is one where the Chief flying instructors' BHPA licence is limited to training clients who already hold the BHPA Club Pilot (Novice) rating or equivalent. There are five main areas in which development schools tend to specialise.

- A) Post CP training. –Working with CP rated clients towards developing their foundation skills, and towards their Pilot rating.  
*The BHPA provides a “Foundation” structure for this\**
- B) Dual pilot training. – Developing the skills required to apply for a BHPA Dual pilot examination and (hopefully) licence.  
*The BHPA provides a dual flying factsheet with advice and guidance for candidates and trainers\*.*
- C) Advanced Glider Control skills (SIV) training. Developing the more advanced glider handling skills required to recognise and manage various instability situations that a pilot may encounter.  
*The BHPA provides requirements and outline syllabus for this type of training (paragliding only)\*.*
- D) Cross-country development and guiding. Briefing, guiding, analysing and improving cross country flying skills  
*The BHPA provides a document detailing the requirements and standards expected for cross-country guiding\*.*
- E) Type conversions: typically introducing clients to speed flying or parakite flying skills.  
*There is a separate BHPA Speed flying syllabus for developing these skills\**  
  
*A parakite specific guidance document/ syllabus is currently in work.*

*\*All these documents are available on the BHPA website, or on request.*

**4/ Microlight training.** Whilst not BHPA schools, the Association also recognises and accepts the UK Civil Aviation Authority National Private Pilots' Licence (NPPL) and other CAA qualifications, as delivered by CAA licenced Flying Instructors and Examiners. Around 600 of our members currently hold Microlight licences.

**All BHPA schools are required to submit annual renewals detailing adequate currency and are subject to periodic inspection and support visits by the BHPA technical staff.**

*Note that some BHPA registered schools are based outside the UK, and these arrange their own public liability insurance. Coverage may not be the same as a UK based school. (This does not affect UK based schools that offer trips to overseas destinations, which enjoy full BHPA coverage for up to 120 days per year overseas (excluding some territories, notably the US and Canada).*

*We are often asked; but the BHPA are unable to register schools that are based outside Europe.*

## 6/ BHPA Events & Course diary 2025/26

Club Coach course	Ulster Club	Oct 11 <sup>th</sup> & 12 <sup>th</sup>
Club Coach course	Thames valley Club	Nov 15 <sup>th</sup> & 16 <sup>th</sup>
Emergency parachute systems	Lilleshall Shropshire	Nov 19 <sup>th</sup> & 20 <sup>th</sup>
Club Coach course	Wessex club	Dec 6 <sup>th</sup> & 7 <sup>th</sup>
Club Coach Course	Derbyshire Soaring Club	Jan 17 <sup>th</sup> & 18 <sup>th</sup>
Club Coach course	TBC (Suffolk)	Feb 14 <sup>th</sup> & 15 <sup>th</sup>
BHPA AGM	Leicester	Feb 28 <sup>th</sup>
Club Coach course	TBC (Sky Surfers Hants)	March 28 <sup>th</sup> & 29 <sup>th</sup>
Instructor/ senior Coach course	Unallocated	21 <sup>st</sup> -24 <sup>th</sup> April

Safe Flying.