



In this Issue

- Keeping wings level
- Returning late from XC
- Incidents at Portmoak
- Launch Point
- Appeal from the Safety Officer

Keeping Wings Level

We all know about keeping the wings level during the ground run of a launch and the dangers of a wing touching the ground at this crucial stage. That's why we need to release before a wing touches the ground.

Unfortunately, I still see the occasional glider with a wing touching the ground or even being dragged along the ground for a few yards without the pilot releasing the cable or tow rope.

There can be different reasons for this:

1. The pilot thinks he can level the wings again before disaster strikes
2. The pilot is not aware that the wing already touched the ground

The first reason can apply to experienced pilots who think they managed to level the wings before in this situation and can do it again. Unfortunately, this can lead to serious and even fatal accidents and there is no reason to hang on to a cable or rope if your wing drops, **ALWAYS RELEASE IMMEDIATELY.**

The second can happen especially to novice pilots or when you are flying a type you haven't flown before or not for a long time. The reason for this is that you can't look at the wing and have to judge the distance between ground and wingtip by the angle of the canopy against the horizon.

There is a simple way to get used to judging this angle. While sitting in the glider at the launch point, get the wingtip holder to lower the wing until it is still 3-4 inches (7-10cm) off the ground. Study that angle, imprint it on

your mind. This is the angle at which you should release and bear in mind that you should release when the view ahead looks like this.

Now get your assistant to lower the wing until it touches the ground. You should already have released when you see this angle.

For each glider the angle at which point the wing touches the ground is different. So it is worth doing this whenever you are about to fly a type of glider you haven't flown before or not for some time.

The picture shows the view from a K21 as the wing touches the ground.



If you are at the winch launch point, be sure to stop the launch if you think a wing is about to touch the ground. The pilot should be able to manage a launch failure at any point but, even if an accident results, it won't be a fatal accident. BGA guidance is clear on this point.

Returning late from a Cross Country Flight

With summertime and longer hours approaching cross country flights may well last into the evening hours. We have a duty of care and need to make

sure all pilots and aircraft are accounted for at the end of the day. However, we can't expect the duty instructor or office staff to stay until

the last pilot returned, possibly as late as 22:00 during summer. We always had a policy that a cross country pilot returning after everyone has left should leave a message on the office phone. But that can't be checked until the next day.

After discussions with instructors and cross country pilots we have come up with a new procedure that should make it easy for a pilot returning late to communicate that fact with the duty instructor

and for the duty instructor to be able to know when everyone is back without having to stay at the airfield. The procedure is available on the pilot website at

[pilots.scottishglidingcentre.co.uk/safety/ssow06 - late return from cross country](https://pilots.scottishglidingcentre.co.uk/safety/ssow06_-_late_return_from_cross_country)

All the procedures are accessible at

pilots.scottishglidingcentre.co.uk/safety/start

Incidents at Portmoak

Since the beginning of 2021 we have had 63 incidents reported at Portmoak, including one accident resulting in serious injury.

As you can see from the diagram, Launch and Landing incidents make up almost half of these, so this is an area of ongoing concern.

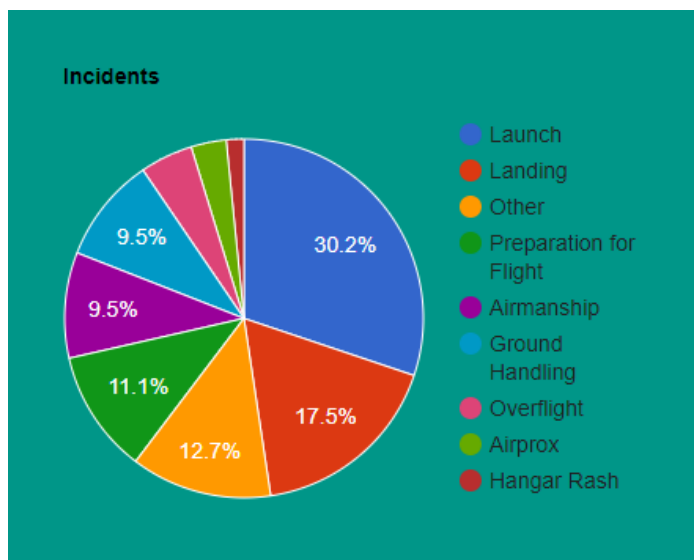
While Ground handling incidents have reduced a lot, it is unfortunately the ground handling incidents that caused significant damage and cost to the club and private fleet. And these are entirely avoidable with a bit of common sense and not getting distracted from your task.

Keep a good lookout, not just in the air but also on the ground.

And remember that everyone who is registered with Flysafe can have a look at the incidents occurring at Portmoak, which can help you avoid similar incidents in future. If you

aren't registered yet, go to

<https://flysafe.scottishglidingcentre.com>



Launch Point

As sent out in a recent email to all members, a couple of the incidents related to the tug on final and a winch launch happening at the same time. This can be very dangerous if the tug has to abort the landing or there is a winch launch failure.

It is very important that the launch controller always listens to the radio and stops the winch

launch when any aircraft calls final. A tug on final, especially into the south field, may not always be visible from the launch point.

So please look and listen at the launch point and be prepared to stop a launch when aircraft are landing.

Appeal from the Safety Officer

And finally I am appealing for some assistance.

The safety officer's job can be quite demanding with flying safety and general health and safety around the airfield, so I am looking for an assistant / deputy to help with this task. With the reorganisation of the club into various committees, and

safety touching most of these, some extra help would be much appreciated. Thanks already to Lyndsey MacLeod, who has taken over from Peter Metcalf to look after the club parachutes. Please contact me at wolfrossmann@gmail.com to volunteer some of your time to the club.