

Gliding into Sleaf

Information for pilots planning to land at Sleaf or flying in the area where an outlanding at the airfield may be possible.



Sleaf is primarily a power airfield. Gliders using Sleaf need to be aware of this and think a little differently, especially if arriving from a cross-country without the opportunity for an on-site briefing.

Following some simple procedures, which amount to no more than good airmanship, will keep everybody happy. NOTHING in these notes should be taken as overriding the principles of safe flight: Aviate, Navigate and Communicate.

Always remember that although you technically have the right of way over power aircraft, that is no consolation if you have a mid-air. Keep a very good scan going and be prepared to take avoiding action or change your plan if necessary.

Arriving at Sleaf

Once you are in the area (say within 5 miles), change to Sleaf Radio on 122.455 and listen out to get an idea of what traffic is about and which runway is in use. However, as some traffic may not have radio, you must also maintain a good look-out throughout particularly for power traffic on long finals when you are on the base leg.

Sleaf radio is mainly manned at the weekend – at other times you MAY get a response, but don't count on it. If there is no reply then any further radio calls should be prefixed as "Sleaf Traffic".

Planning your Circuit

If it looks likely that you will land at Sleaf, start to position yourself for a circuit onto the correct runway. An early call advising of your intentions will alert other users and may elicit the information you need. Eg "Sleaf Radio glider XYZ approaching the ATZ from the west at 1500' to land at Sleaf, request your runway in use".

- Power traffic circuits are to the east of the airfield ie 23LH, 36RH etc normally at 1000', note that gyrocopter traffic may be encountered inside the power pattern at 800';
- During the week, if able to do so then conform to the power circuit noting the proximity of the Shawbury ATZ. At weekends or when Shawbury are not operating then the glider circuit on the western side can be utilised but caution the risk flying opposite direction circuits particularly in the final approach area and that you are flying a circuit on the power 'dead side' as they descend in the overhead;
- Give yourself plenty of height and time to do this, so you can get to where you want to be without cutting across the power circuits.;
- Don't enter the ATZ (i.e. get within 2 miles of the centre of the airfield below 2000') unless you are planning to land;
- Plan to start the downwind leg not above 800' AGL – this will put you below the fixed wing aircraft descending 'deadside' or in the circuit and minimise risk of conflict

Flying your Circuit

- You should fly a traditional (square) circuit. As you enter the downwind leg, make a radio call on 122.455 eg “Sleep Radio, Glider XYZ downwind (Left / Right) Runway XX”. If you get a response, you may acknowledge it simply with your callsign – “Glider XYZ”.
- As you turn onto the base leg, a second call may assist awareness for other traffic eg “Sleep Radio, Glider XYZ (Left / Right) base Runway XX”
- As you turn final for the runway “Sleep Radio, Glider XYZ final Runway XX”. Be extra vigilant for traffic that may be on a longer final for the same runway

Don't get distracted by other radio chatter – concentrate on a safe landing. Remember that you are telling them what you are doing, NOT asking for permission.

On the Ground

Once on the ground, clear the glider from the active runway immediately

- If you are able to turn off into the disused runway 28/10, do so;
- If you can safely roll clear on to a non active runway then do so but caution other aircraft which may be holding or carrying out checks. If you stop close to a runway intersection then push the glider off the active runway;
- Otherwise, push the glider onto the grass at the edge of the runway.

Don't wander around on the runway after landing – the power pilots will be anxious to use it! If Shropshire Soaring Group are on the airfield they will of course help. Otherwise, make your way (safely!) to the control tower and the Aero Club office.

- If it all goes pear-shaped.....do not land on the grass or crop within the airfield perimeter except in emergencies;
- Do not roll across the runway edges onto or off the runway, surfaces are unknown and particularly on 05/23 and 18/36 where there is a risk of hitting runway lights. Caution raised threshold lights on runway 18/36;
- The disused runway 28/10 is not normally used by gliders but is perfectly landable if necessary
- If in doubt as to the active runway then plan your landing to land short so as not to cross any other intersecting runway

In the event of circuit emergencies including serious traffic conflicts or height misjudgments, remember your priorities are to aviate, navigate and communicate strictly in that order. ie:-

- The first priority is to maintain a good look-out, safe airspeed and height margins;
- The second priority is to land safely on any part of the airfield or elsewhere that does not endanger anyone else;
- Finally, and only if you have time, tell Sleep Radio and/or other traffic of your revised intentions.

