

Paramotor Code of practice
Paramotoring. BHPA code of conduct / rules

1. Preamble

The document is intended to give general guidance, and unless otherwise stated, its contents are not mandatory. However it should be noted that where disputes arise which could lead to legal action, non-compliance may be detrimental.

2. Association Requirements

In addition to mandatory requirements, the BHPA may introduce regulations from time to time. Pilots should maintain their membership of the Associations to keep up to date with existing and new regulations and guidance. If you are not a member of BHPA you should join and obtain a rating. If you become involved in legal action in the future, proof of your skills and knowledge via your pilot rating may well be an advantage. You will be covered by the BHPA insurance for 3rd party claims.

3. Taking Off - General

Wherever possible a Paramotor should take off from a recognised and/or non-public area. One possibility is an existing microlight airfield which has the appropriate Local Authority permissions.

When Pilots take off from existing microlight areas they should familiarise themselves with and comply with local rules, particularly those relating to noise sensitive areas and numbers of Aircraft movements per day.

If a Paramotor takes off from other areas the following procedures should be taken:

1. Permission should be obtained from the owner of the land.
2. The area should be secure from the possibility of animals and/or spectators being in an area of danger.
3. Any spectators should be properly marshalled and any dogs should be firmly attached to a lead. (They have been known to chase the Paramotor when it starts to move.)

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4. The take-off area should be closely inspected for possible trips and holes. (To at least expected take-off distance + 50%.)

5. Any neighbours should be informed of your future activities.

3.1 Taking off - Planning Approval

Unless the land is in a special zone such as a conservation area you can usually fly from a temporary take-off area on twenty eight days in any twelve months. If you fly on more than twenty eight days without Planning Approval the owner of the land may be served with an enforcement notice by the Local Authority and could be subject to a fine. Local Authorities will generally include all of the land in one ownership in an enforcement order so don't try to argue that you are taking off from different fields and they each have a twenty eight day dispensation.

The Local Authority may also have local bye laws which should not be contravened.

3.2 Taking Off - Nuisance

Even if you comply with the Planning Regulations you may fall foul of the law of nuisance. For a prosecution to take place there must be evidence that the nuisance has occurred on a regular basis.

A video of you taking off ten days in succession at 6 a.m. very close to a house could result in a large fine and the confiscation of your aircraft.

3.3 Taking Off - Hang Gliding and Paragliding Sites

Don't - unless you have permission from the club.

4. Paramotor Flying - General

If you regularly take off from one place, vary your flight path to avoid annoying the general public.

In particular, powered paragliders flying against the wind will remain in view and earshot for a long period of time, If they fly higher to make less noise they may fly slower due to the wind gradient. If you are not making much headway it may be better to land and get a lift back to base.

It should be noted that German research has shown that an aircraft is a

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greater source of annoyance if it can be seen.

4.1 Flying Paramotors - Hang Gliding and Paragliding Sites

It will be very tempting to buzz your mates who are grounded on a nil wind day. Don't.

A number of Hang Gliding and Paragliding Clubs have introduced rules which generally exclude SPHG'S (paramotors) and in at least one case there is a self-declared exclusion zone around each site. (Most such sites were negotiated with land owners on the basis of the activity being silent.) Unless you actually know that powered machines are welcome on a particular site, treat all such sites as PPR (Prior Permission Required), just as you should if planning to visit alternative airfields or strips.

The general rule to be followed is use your common sense and stay away.

4.2 Flying - Livestock

Adherence to the General exemption should mean that livestock is not disturbed. However, you should particularly avoid bird sanctuaries and riding stables. If you are taking-off from a field you should check that there are no horse riders in the vicinity. If there are - wait.

5 . Landing

For a variety of reasons you may decide to 'land-out'.

If you are landing on private land you must find the landowner and tell him/her of your arrival.

Courtesy takes five minutes of your time and invariably results in a pleasant experience. One pilot always carries a miniature bottle of scotch with him to offer to the landowner which is always accepted with amusement and gratitude. (It's the thought that counts!)

It should be noted that some years ago a pilot was fined many thousands of pounds for attempting to land in a field and in changing to a fly-over was reported by two ramblers on the ground. He was prosecuted for breaking the 500ft rule.

6. Display flying

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The laws on Display flying require each pilot to hold a CAA Display Authorisation. Obtaining a DA involves having your planned display evaluated by a Display Authorisation Evaluator appointed by CAA. The offices of the BMAA or BHPA will be able to give you the names of Display Evaluators authorised to evaluate SPHG display pilots. (You will also need to become acquainted with CAP403, the CAA Air Display bible.)

7 . Conclusion

Any breach of common sense or good manners is a breach of this Code of Practice.