

Stuart Short

Stuart was a founder member of GLSW and Surrey Scout Parascending club and is still involved more than 40 years later in what is now the only remaining scout club. In that time he has given thousands of young people their first experience in a parachute (a conservative estimate extrapolated from club records is 7000) through 1-day badge courses, weekend camps and jamborees that took whole weeks of his leave from a demanding career as a paramedic. Some scouts, including current club committee members and instructors, became regular attenders at scout weekends and progressed to flying accuracy via the scout nationals where, under Stuart's leadership, the club regularly won the lion's share of trophies and also took responsibility for the towing. The club has been part of the flying journey for more than one national and international medal winner (in both classic and paragliding accuracy) and club teams have lifted national trophies on 8 occasions and won the European Grand Prix once. Members are also, more recently, venturing into competitive cross-country flying. Stuart is at the heart of the club and has been instrumental in sustaining it over the years.

Stuart has held multiple roles within the club and although ill health recently forced him to step down as CFI, a role he held since the 1980s, he has remained involved as club Chairman. He has consistently dedicated more time to supporting the flying of others than to his own flying, including towing for training weekends and competitions with vehicle and winch and providing expert first aid cover. Always supportive of the development of others he has encouraged club members to improve their skills and gain qualifications, bringing instructors through the system and presiding over operations on the airfield with an eagle eye and a quiet word when needed; no matter who was duty instructor everyone knew who was really in charge! He also created a family atmosphere within the club, actively ensuring everyone's welfare and encouraging the social aspects of club membership.

In 2012 Stuart was the recipient of the Nigel Legg award for services to paragliding accuracy and in 2019 he joined the BHPA Accuracy Panel, initially as Secretary and later as Chair, another position his ongoing health issues have unfortunately forced him to relinquish. His long-standing, unselfish commitment to Scout and Accuracy flying and his support for others, still continuing as much as he is currently able, make him a worthy nominee for a BHPA award of merit.