

# Some thoughts on Task Setting from Aston Down

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## Negative Features

**Keep out of Sea Air**, which is rarely soarable. The useable country gets smaller every hour, as good soaring weather generates sea breezes. Sea air comes inland fast, especially down-wind and where there are no hills to stop it.

### Classic problem areas are:

- **The Severn Valley** – In a SW wind Nymphsfield is frequently unsoarable all day. The Severn Valley is generally to be avoided, but especially if there is any South in the wind or it is late in the day. Glass gliders can final glide from the Malverns – sometimes...
- **The Wash** – Husbands Bosworth is often unsoarable all day in a NE wind. Even 5kts NE can make Rugby unsoarable by 6pm. Generally, don't go to east of amber one if there is any east in the wind.
- **The Wirral / Cheshire Gap** – In a 10kt wind the sea breeze gets to Shrewsbury before 4pm and can get to Gloucester by 8pm. Only go to Shrewsbury early in the day or with an Easterly wind component.
- **Bridgewater Flats** – Winds from SW to W soon cut off the area South of the Mendips. The route to Sherbourne is over higher ground but don't go there at all, in any wind, after 1pm. Only go to Yeovil or beyond as a first turning point and then preferably when the wind is between NNE and E.
- Don't go to **Lasham in a southerly**. The sea breeze gets to Lasham at about 6pm with a light N wind.
- Thermals generally get worse and cloud base lower **North of Doncaster**.

## Positive Features

- **Hills facing the sun or wind** generate thermals or, if things get desperate, you may be able to ridge soar. Try to set tasks to suit, e.g. come down the Cotswold Edge in the evening with a NW wind.
- **High dry ground and hilly country** (e.g. Cotswolds) generate much better thermals than low, flat, wet ground, e.g. the Severn Valley and Bridgewater Flats.
- **Wales** should, in theory, be good. We don't make nearly enough use of its hills as thermal sources. For the less brave, out and return to Iron Bridge allows the use of the hills without getting into unlandable country.

- **It is possible to drift downwind** for miles in week lift early and late in the day when progress into wind is impossible. Try to arrange tasks to suit.
- **It is much faster to go cross-wind** than upwind/downwind, unless there is significant steering (which there usually isn't).
- **Make use of different wind directions and strengths over the country**, if possible. e.g. with high pressure centred over the UK, WAT-LAS is downwind all the way, whereas LAS – WAT is upwind.

## **Thunderstorms**

Thunderstorms are much more common inland than near coasts. Don't go to Central England when they are forecast. Leicester is the UK Thunderstorm Centre.

## **Finally**

All this results in final glides down the Cotswolds, late in the day, into sun. If you paint your instrument fairing matt black and clean your canopy, you will be able to see the red hangars of success!

## **300km Flights from Aston Down**

316 km Watford Gap (WAT) - Lasham (LAS) (or reversed)  
West-North-NNE wind

309 km Yeovil Reservoir (YEO) – Lasham (LAS)  
Difficult airspace - Yeovilton in the way  
North-East wind

315 km Strubby (SBY) o & r  
SE or NW wind

321 km Peterborough (PET) o & r  
S or NW wind

301 km Caxton Gibbet (CAX) o & r  
S wind

301km Alton (ALT) Worcester (WOR)  
N or E wind only after no rain

309km Banbury (BAN) – Shrewsbury (SHS)  
NE or E wind

313km Shobdon (SHO) – Northampton South (NOS)  
Light winds

308 km Kingsclere (KGS) – Husbands Bosworth (HUS)  
Light S wind