Where Mentoring fits in.

The basic pilot development:-

1. After the initial, “that looks good let’s have a go,” you sign up for EP and CP training.
2. CPs developing their skills to Pilot level flying at the main training sites. However you are still effectively following the lead of the more experienced pilots but still in student mode. This stage can now be supported through the learners group (a form of mentoring as a group) that has recently been established and hopefully leading onto people sitting the pilot rating exam.
3. New pilots developing a **confident,** **informed and independent pilot attitude**, not so easy. A number of pilots don’t really go much further and settle for nice days at the big sites and just enjoy the company, but if you wish to develop further this is when you have to **take control** and start driving your own development.
4. To infinity and beyond!

The mentoring workshop is primarily aimed at supporting step 3 but step 2 pilots will also benefit. I would also like to highlight that this mentoring process has to be driven by you, the mentee. This change in mind set from the apprehensive student to an independent pilot is fundamental. The pilots in group 4 have already done their time and put a lot effort into developing their own skills, so when the opportunity to fly comes around they are off. It’s your turn now!

There are a few pilots who are unstoppable, self-motivated people who can dedicate time and finances to develop their skills very quickly. However the majority of people are not in this position and it is this larger group of people that can benefit from some further guidance and encouragement at this stage to make this progression.

Why develop a **confident, informed and independent** attitude towards your flying?

1. If you only stick to the training sites that you are comfortable with, you may feel very secure, but will greatly limit your own skill development and enjoyment.
2. By forcing yourself to making your own decisions based on the weather forecast you will develop far more quickly a comprehensive understanding of the weather systems and the conditions that affect particular sites.
3. On days with a good potential, the senior pilot are going to be 95% focused on their own flying and quite rightly so. So if you can’t be enthusiastic, and get yourself organized then don’t expect them to hang around too long waiting to see what you want to do.

This is why I would recommend trying to clearly define what you would like to achieve by producing your own action plan for the coming year. In this way you will be constructively reviewing what you have already achieved and what your next steps should be and your mentor will then also be able to provide more constructive comments. It is not my intention that your Mentor on the club night should become a Mentor over the following year. Yes you may end up flying with them but the aim of this process is to get away from the idea that you are being led. As you start to take a lead in your own flying you will find your own flying buddies who will in effect then become your mentors but in a more casual manner.