



Inspiring a younger generation into STEM and the Aviation Industry

Our goal: Inspiring young people to explore careers in STEM and aviation, to support and encourage their future career choices.

How can you help? By sharing your story

Name & job role:	Sir Stephen Hillier, Chair of the Civil Aviation Authority
What did you enjoy doing when you were younger?	Anything to do with flying and the Royal Air Force, including being in the Air Training Corps.
What were your favourite subjects in school? Why?	English, History and Geography – I’ve always enjoyed language and learning about the world, past, present and future. But I’ve also always liked technology and been excited by innovation and new developments – how leading-edge technology works and in particular using it.
What or who inspired you to study these?	My Mother for my love of words, my Father for aviation and technology, and both for my love of knowledge and learning.
Did you do work experience? Where and did it help in choosing your career path?	No. I joined the Royal Air Force direct from school – being a pilot in the RAF is what I’d always wanted to do, and I’m very fortunate to have had the opportunity to pursue that ambition to its full.
What was your first job?	While I was at school, I had a part-time job working in a garage, which amongst many other things helped me learn how to fix my sometimes unreliable motorbike! My first full-time job was the RAF.
How did you arrive where you are in your career?	I fulfilled my life ambition and became a fast-jet pilot in the RAF. I went on to have a full career in the RAF, eventually becoming the Chief of the Air Staff, the head of the Service. Shortly after I left the RAF, I entered the competition for Chair of the Civil Aviation Authority, a position I was appointed to on 1 August 2020.
What do you love about your current job?	The CAA awarded me my Private Pilot’s Licence when I was 17 years old, following a Flying Scholarship with the Air Training Corps. Joining

Thank you for sharing your journey.

	<p>the CAA as its Chair some 40 years after the award of that Licence felt very much like completing a personal life-journey in aviation. The opportunity to continue playing my part in the development and success of aerospace in the UK is something which inspires me every day.</p>
<p>What were the biggest challenges/barriers you had to overcome?</p>	<p>Pilot selection and training can be tough and demanding, but while the path of learning and progress is sometimes steep, it's worth it when you get to the summit.</p> <p>Leadership is a huge responsibility, but the opportunity to motivate, inspire and make a difference is a tremendous privilege every day.</p>
<p>Who have you looked up to and why?</p>	<p>My parents, for providing me with example, support and the encouragement to try and to do my best.</p> <p>All those who have succeeded in aerospace and leadership and from whom I have learned.</p>
<p>What is your ambition?</p>	<p>To play my part to the full in ensuring that aerospace continues to be safe, successful and forward-looking; and that others have the opportunities and can be inspired by aerospace in the way that I have been throughout my life.</p>
<p>What is the best advice you were given?</p>	<p>The teacher at school who advised me that I would never become a pilot, because that advice made me more determined then ever to pursue my ambition and to prove them wrong!</p>
<p>What advice would you give a younger you?</p>	<p>Hold on to your commitment, keep doing what you're doing and working towards your goals, take every opportunity available to you – and don't worry, it's going to turn out all right!</p>

Any additional comments:

I was the Chief of the Air Staff during RAF100, the Centenary celebrations of the Service in 2018. One of the key goals of RAF100 was to inspire future generations, so we developed an aerospace STEM programme which reached out to 1.8 million young people in schools across the UK. And in 2019, the RAF was named 'Apprentice Employer of the Year' at the Annual Apprentice Conference Awards. I'm proud now to be able to bring that sort of experience into supporting the excellent work which the CAA is doing to promote STEM careers and aerospace apprenticeships.

Thank you for sharing your journey.



Sir Stephen Hillier, Chair of the Civil Aviation Authority, 2020



Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier, Chief of the Air Staff (and Tornado pilot), 2019

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