

## Noise and Airspace Community Forum (NACF)

### Summary Minutes (7 Feb 2024, 13:00-16:00, Radisson Blu Heathrow)

---

#### Confirmed attendees

Name	Borough / Organisation
Andreas Lambrianou	Chair
David Hilton *	Ascot Parish Council
Cllr Dr Wendy Matthews	Buckinghamshire Council
Darren Rhodes *	CAA
John Burton	CAA
Abigail Grenfell	CAA
Mark Izatt	CISHA
Laura Keith	CISHA
Ian Greene *	DfT
Gary Marshall *	DfT
Hafsah Abid *	DfT
Margaret Majumdar	Ealing Aircraft Noise Action Group
Nigel Davies *	Englefield Green Action Group
Paul Conway	Englefield Green Action Group
Paul Beckford *	HACAN
Christine Taylor	Harmondsworth and Sipson Residents Association
Armelle Thomas	Harmondsworth and Sipson Residents Association
Becky Coffin	Heathrow
Mike Glen	Heathrow
Lisa Forshew	Heathrow
Rick Norman	Heathrow
Richard West	Heathrow
Pierre Sohier	Heathrow
Michael Thornton *	Heathrow Strategic Planning Group
Colin Stanbury *	Local Authorities Aircraft Noise Council
Cllr John Martin	London Borough of Ealing
Surinderpal Suri *	London Borough of Ealing
Deborah Petty	Molesey Residents Association
Robin Clarke *	NATS
Bridget Bell	Plane Hell Action
Neil Maybin *	Richmond Heathrow Campaign
Peter Willan *	Richmond Heathrow Campaign
Cllr Chris Howorth	Runnymede Borough Council
Cllr Sean Beatty *	Spelthorne Borough Council
Dave Gilbert	Teddington Action Group
Stephen Clark	Teddington Action Group
Andy Barker *	Thinks Insight & Strategy
Richard Harbord	Windlesham Society
Peter Killwick	Verita
Kieran Seale	Verita

\* *Attended online*

## Apologies

Steve Braund	Buckinghamshire Council
Spencer Norton	British Airways
Pete Glass	NATS
David Matthews	NATS
Ian Jopson	NATS
Cllr Lewis Mears	Surrey Heath Borough Council
Cllr Mark Howard	Windsor & Maidenhead

## 1 Welcome and Introduction

- 1.1 Andreas Lambrianou (AL) welcomed members to the forum.
- 1.2 Armelle Thomas (AT) led members in observing one minute's silence in remembrance of local community members Phil Rumsey and Brenda Hogg.
- 1.3 Margaret Majumdar (MM) asked for the meeting notes to be referred to as minutes. AL explained that in the spirit of encouraging open conversation the forum did not publish verbatim minutes but, in line with the NACF Terms of Reference, publishes summary minutes. He confirmed that her point had been noted.
- 1.4 Bridget Bell (BB) noted that noise complaint reports from 2018 to 2023 were published on Heathrow's website and asked if earlier reports were available. **ACTION RW**
- 1.5 AL provided updates on the actions from the previous meeting as detailed below.
- 1.6 **Provide 4% climb compliance data for easterly and westerly operations (2.3).** Mike Glen (MG) reminded members that departing aircraft are required to reach an altitude of 1,000ft at 6.5km from start of roll, after which they are required to maintain a climb gradient of not less than 4% up to 4,000ft. In 2023, overall compliance to the 4% climb gradient requirement was 99.9%. There were 221 violations, 156 of which were westerly departures and 65 were easterly departures.
- 1.7 **Provide late running flight data broken down into 30-minute intervals (2.4).** AL confirmed that this had been sent out to the member who requested it. MM asked for it to be circulated to all members. **ACTION RW**
- 1.8 **Provide data on the occupancy rates of late running flights (3.21).** AL advised that Heathrow was unable to provide data on occupancy rates as it is commercially sensitive information.

## 2 Data Dashboard

- 2.1 Mike Glen (MG) presented Heathrow's Operational KPI Dashboard for January 2024.
- 2.2 MG explained that Continuous Descent Approaches (CDA) were now measured from 6,800ft instead of 6,000ft following feedback from members. He added that CDA could not be measured from 7,000ft as originally requested because aircraft were still in the holding stacks at that altitude. Darren Rhodes (DR) explained that CDA was originally measured from 6,000ft to avoid issues around the transition altitude (the altitude at which aircraft change from the use of local barometer derived altitudes to nominal altitudes). He expressed concern that raising this to 6,800ft might result in false violations and

asked what comparisons had been carried out between the two methods. MG explained that a year's worth of comparison had shown only 1% difference in results, none of which appeared to be due to the pressure setting.

- 2.3 AT observed that there had been ten nights with late running flights in January and asked how many late flights there had been. Rick Norman (RN) pointed to page two of the dashboard which showed there had been 11 late departures and 2 late arrivals.
- 2.4 BB asked how many early morning arrivals landed between 04:30 and 06:00. MG advised that 14 to 18 arrivals were currently scheduled to operate in that period.
- 2.5 Surinderpal Suri (SS) noted that night-time was usually defined as an 8-hour period from 23:00 to 07:00 and suggested it would be useful to report on the number of flights in that period. RN advised that data going back to 2001 was available in Heathrow's response to the DfT night flight consultation (available [here](#)) and that 8-hour noise contours were also produced. However, the dashboard was based on the regulations currently in place which refer to the night quota period from 23:30 to 06:00.

### 3 CAA Workplan and Noise Action Plan Study

- 3.1 John Burton (JB) gave a presentation discussing Noise Action Plans, an update on the CAA's work programme, the Aviation Noise Attitudes Survey (ANAS) and airport engagement practices. The presentation was circulated prior to the meeting.
- 3.2 JB explained that the DfT and DEFRA had asked the CAA to investigate the efficiency and effectiveness of Noise Action Plans as a method of noise management. Michael Thornton (MT) asked if the review would impact the next round of action planning for the period 2029-2033. JB explained that it would depend on the recommendations but confirmed that any major changes to legislation would not be delivered in time for the current round of Noise Action Plans. BB asked if the CAA would consider all UK airports. JB replied that 10 airports would be included, and the list would be shared when available.
- 3.3 JB provided an update on the Aviation Noise Attitudes Survey (ANAS). He explained that the first wave of the study had a very strong response rate and would be sharing the details at a meeting tomorrow. Stephen Clark (SC) asked if the study would feed into the decision making for the Government's Airspace Modernisation programme. JB recalled that Ian Greene (IG) had previously given a presentation to the forum explaining that ANAS was just one of many factors that would feed into policy. He advised that the purpose of ANAS was to further develop the evidence base, but he was confident that the existing evidence base could be used at the moment. He explained that the evidence base builds over the years, but a lack of data from ANAS would not be a reason to not continue with plans for Airspace Modernisation. Deborah Petty (DP) asked if the results from tomorrow's meeting could be shared with forum members. JB confirmed that the slide deck would be made available. **ACTION JB**
- 3.4 JB advised that the DfT had commissioned a review of airport engagement practices to ensure that engagement and complaint handling practices continued to be effective. He advised that the CAA was currently drafting guidance and would be consulting in the Spring.

### 4 Noise Complaints Process Review

- 4.1 Kieran Seale (KS) presented Verita's review of Heathrow's noise complaints handling

process that was commissioned by the Council for the Independent Scrutiny of Heathrow Airport (CISHA). Peter Killwick (PK) commented that Heathrow provided an outstanding noise complaints service with good response times and a high-quality website. He noted that frustration in the process mostly came when nothing changed following a complaint as most of the issues were not in Heathrow's gift to change. The review made a number of recommendations covering the complaints policy, the explanation of outcomes, signposting and mental health issues. The presentation was circulated prior to the meeting.

- 4.2 Peter Willan (PW) asked how complaints reflected events. Richard West (RW) advised that Heathrow's noise complaint reports (available [here](#)) included a breakdown of complaints by category such as late runners, early morning arrivals and track keeping.
- 4.3 Cllr Chris Howorth (CH) welcomed the recommendations and encouraged Heathrow to take them on board. He was interested to understand how complaints could influence policy change and how the forum could work with the DfT and the CAA to improve the experience of local communities. AL noted that the forum had looked at the wide range of stakeholders involved in policy development in March 2023, adding that Heathrow's upcoming Noise Action Plan would also provide an overview of future plans.
- 4.4 Stephen Clark (SC) welcomed the report and thought that the complaints system worked well, but agreed there should be more focus on possible outcomes.
- 4.5 Becky Coffin (BC) thanked CISHA and forum members for working with Verita on the report, noting that it helped Heathrow to understand what worked and what could be improved. She confirmed that Heathrow reviewed complaints data internally on a regular basis and would provide a formal response to the report once it had been published.
- 4.6 Mark Izatt (MI) asked members to submit comments for what could be included in Phase 2 of the review.
- 4.7 SS suggested (via the chat) that the process for the investigation of complaints should be independent and should involve the regulator. He asked if the recommendations in the report were mandatory and suggested that complaints about noise and health impacts should result in policy review. AL confirmed that he would pass on the comments to Verita. **ACTION AL**
- 4.8 PW assumed (via the chat) that most complaints were made when something out of the ordinary happened and proposed that policy should deal with the ordinary impact that affected the two million people around Heathrow who did not make complaints.
- 4.9 MT suggested (via the chat) that Heathrow's online complaints form could be improved by asking for as much specific information as possible, asking what remedy was wanted, and signposting to other bodies when the solution was not in Heathrow's gift.

## 5 Air Quality Project

- 5.1 Andy Barker (AB) presented a report by Thinks Insight & Strategy commissioned by CISHA to look at community views on air quality around Heathrow. The report scrutinised existing literature, gathered local views and produced a set of recommendations for Heathrow and CISHA. These included building evidence on the impact of air pollution, expanding the monitoring infrastructure, improving how data is displayed, introducing independent oversight and reviewing air quality targets and expectations for airlines and other airport suppliers. The presentation was circulated prior to the meeting.

- 5.2 CH asked if a full copy of the report was available. MI confirmed that it could be downloaded from the CISHA website (available [here](#)).
- 5.3 SC felt that oversight of air quality should be the responsibility of the Department of Health. MI explained that part of the rationale of the report was to provide shared learning.
- 5.4 SS advised that local authorities worked closely with the Heathrow Air Quality Working Group (HAQWG) but an action plan was needed with targets to improve air quality.
- 5.5 PW stressed the importance of local road traffic on air quality. BC explained that the HAQWG looked at the data and sources in detail and confirmed that while local air quality was improving the main source was road traffic. She suggested that CISHA could signpost members to more information.
- 5.6 AT commented that there had been no pollution anywhere in 2010 when Europe was closed because nobody was travelling to the airport. She added that Heathrow should do all it could to stop people using cars. BB was concerned that concentrated flight paths would result in concentrated emissions for those overflowed. Christine Taylor (CT) added that heavy goods vehicles transporting cargo also caused air quality issues around the airport. AL confirmed that he would pass on the comments to the HAQWG. **ACTION AL**

## 6 Community Slot

- 6.1 Dave Gilbert (DG) gave a presentation on sideways noise modelling. He suggested that sideways noise was higher than modelled in urban areas which may have an impact on departure profile analysis. The presentation was circulated prior to the meeting.
- 6.2 Rick Norman (RN) acknowledged that the topic was on Heathrow's radar and would be picked up at the next departure profile meeting in March. He noted that DR was leading the departure profile study and it would be brought back to the forum in May.
- 6.3 CT commented that building hotels and concreting over green space affected noise levels in Harmondsworth. DP suggested that if larger aircraft produced more sideways noise, then airlines should be penalised for not using slots properly by flying ghost flights.
- 6.4 IG advised that the CAA had been asked to look at low angles of elevation as part of the proposed work plan for 2025.
- 6.5 DR noted that he had spent half of his life discussing sideways noise modelling. He urged caution, explaining that it was an incredibly complex discussion and that the NACF was not the right forum for this debate.

## 7 Heathrow Updates

- 7.1 MG gave an update on community noise monitor deployment. He reminded members that they had agreed for monitors to be deployed in Kiln Green and Walton-on-Thames. He explained that it had not been possible to find a suitable location in Walton-on-Thames, so a nearby site across the river in Shepperton had been secured instead. Both deployments were now progressing well, and licences were being arranged by the legal team.
- 7.2 PW asked (via the chat) what level the noise monitors could measure down to. SS asked (via the chat) for Heathrow to devise criteria for community noise monitors so that

installation delays could be avoided. This information was circulated to members last year and is published on a dedicated Noise Monitor page on Heathrow's website (available [here](#)).

- 7.3 Lisa Forshew (LF) provided an update on Heathrow's Airspace Modernisation Airspace Change Proposal (ACP). She advised that the CAA had informed Heathrow in late October that the airport had not passed the CAP1616 Stage 2 Gateway. The CAA decided that Heathrow did not meet the criteria relating to stakeholder engagement. In November, Heathrow requested clarity from the CAA to enable the airport to update its submission and resubmit. The CAA responded on 26th January 2024, and Heathrow is now considering this information and its next steps.
- 7.4 AT asked if this would mean further consultation with local communities. LF suggested that there may be some engagement, possibly by email instead of face to face, but that it was too early to say. Paul Beckford (PB) asked when members would know why Heathrow had failed the gateway. LF explained that the minutes of Heathrow's meeting with the CAA would be uploaded to the portal upon approval from the CAA.

## **8 AOB**

- 8.1 No other business was raised.

### **Date of next meeting**

20 March 2024 (13:00-16:00) – Radisson Blu Edwardian, 140 Bath Road, Hayes, UB3 5AW