



***HEATHROW COMMUNITY FORUMS REVIEW  
CONSULTATION FEEDBACK SUMMARY REPORT***



## Executive summary

### Background

The impact of Covid-19 has had devastating impacts on Heathrow and the aviation industry as a whole. Unfortunately, this has led the airport to make some difficult decisions to safeguard Heathrow's future. This includes a significant organisational restructure meaning the resources we now have available to the Heathrow Communities team, are more limited. Over the last year, we have also seen unprecedented change in how we all live and work. This provides a unique opportunity to improve how we engage across our communities, building on the good work of recent years.

To prioritise our areas of focus going forward, a thorough review is underway to simplify and streamline our engagement through our community forums and meetings. This included a 4-week consultation with local stakeholders and communities in January 2021 to seek their feedback on our engagement through these channels. The following summarises the findings of the consultation feedback and what we plan to do next.

### Main findings

In total we received 38 responses from a range of local stakeholders and community groups and representatives. The majority of stakeholders said they attended Heathrow's current forums because they want to be kept informed and to find out more about the airport's operations. There was also a high percentage who attended in order to offer a community voice and to challenge and influence Heathrow's decisions.

78% of stakeholders felt that Heathrow should consider using an independent chair for larger community forum meetings. There was a strong consensus that having an independent chair would provide balance, transparency, and trust, as well as improve the credibility of community meetings.

Most stakeholders told us that they would prefer for meetings to be held on a quarterly basis, although a small number felt that a monthly basis was more appropriate. There was a strong preference for meetings to take place in the afternoon. Over half of stakeholders felt that two hours was a sufficient length of time for a meeting.

When asked what has worked well with Heathrow's previous engagement, feedback included stakeholders welcoming the opportunity to engage with other community groups and experts and finding meetings helpful to be kept up to date with what was happening at the airport, as well as having the opportunity to understand more about Heathrow's operations.

When asked what hadn't worked well. Feedback included – meeting agendas being driven too much by Heathrow, a lack of trust and transparency, questions not being answered and limited, or no action taken to address concerns, not enough time to explore issues thoroughly and slow response times to community queries.

All stakeholders thought that it was important to include a range of different speakers and organisations from outside of Heathrow at forum meetings. The most popular suggestions being Government, particularly the Department for Transport (DfT), NATS (Air Traffic Control), Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and airlines.

The vast majority of stakeholders felt that it was important for Heathrow to be engaging with a wide and diverse range of stakeholders, although some felt that striking the right balance was difficult. Several others felt that given the size and impact of the airport's operation, Heathrow's should prioritise engaging with those closest and most impacted.

Most stakeholders agreed with Heathrow having a Code of Conduct to ensure a safe space for everyone to share their views and opinions. Some stakeholders noted that the Code of Conduct should be followed by all, including industry and Heathrow representatives, something they felt hadn't always been the case in previous meetings.

Regarding the proposed Rules of Engagement, many stakeholders felt strongly that two members from each community group/organisation should be able to attend the forum and not just one. Several stakeholders felt that they couldn't commit to recognising Heathrow's legal right to exist and operate within its current cap.

## **Next steps**

Along with our ongoing review, we are taking account of all the feedback received which will help shape the new community forum structure. We will share our proposals in the coming months, with the aim of implementing our new forums structure over the summer period.

**Heathrow Communities Team, March 2021**

## Introduction

2020 was an unprecedented year and Heathrow has changed more than we could ever have imagined. Unfortunately, Covid-19 has, and continues to have, a devastating impact on our operations. This has led to the business making difficult decisions to safeguard Heathrow's future. Inevitably the resources we now have available to us are more limited, which consequently means we need to prioritise our areas of focus going forward in the Heathrow Communities team. Over the last year, we have also seen unprecedented change in how we all live and work. This provides a unique opportunity to improve how we engage across our communities, building on the good work of recent years.

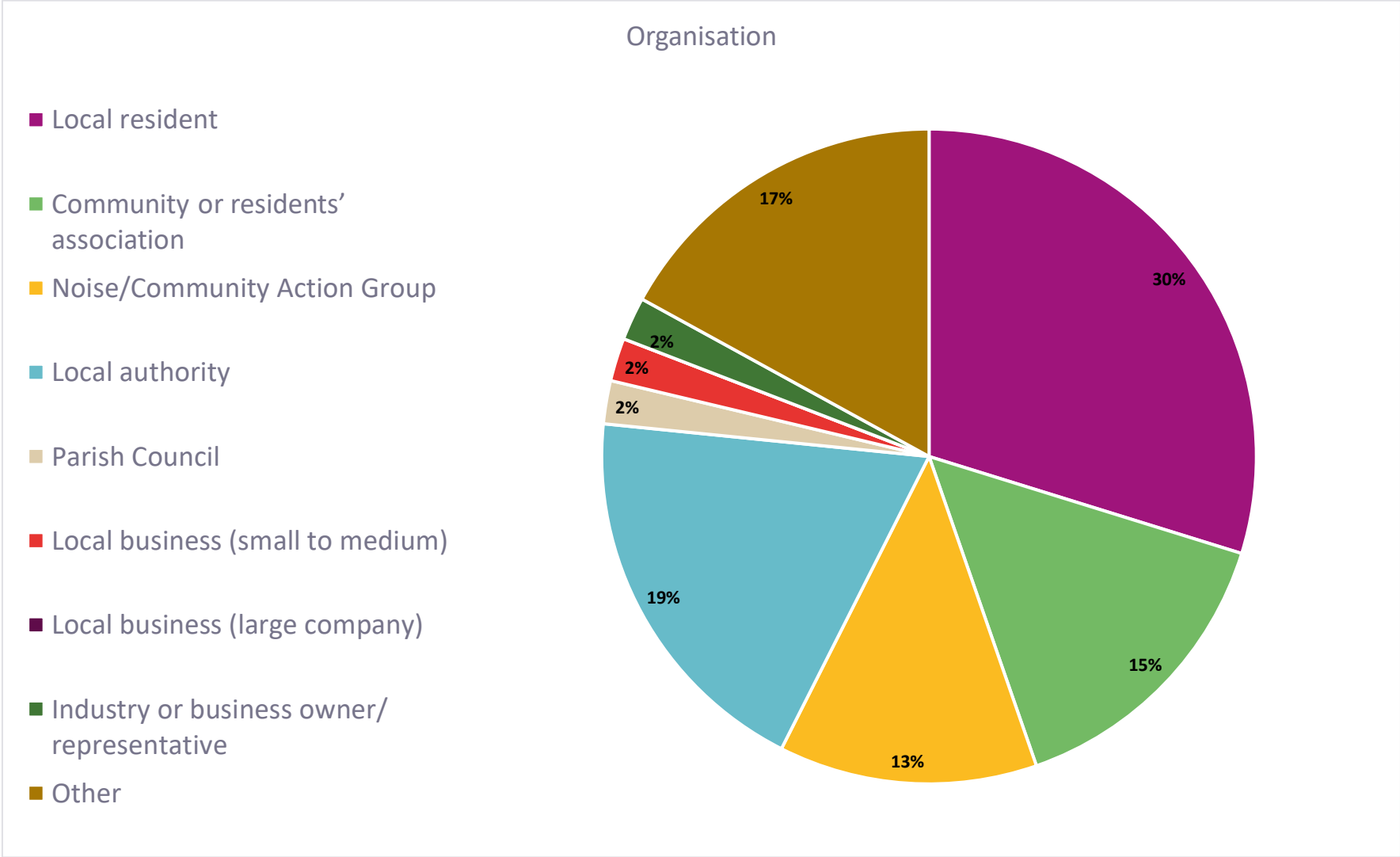
To do so, we have been reviewing our community forums and meetings and seeking feedback from our local stakeholders with the aim of simplifying and streamlining our engagement through these channels. This is to ensure our resources can have the most impact and deliver the most value.

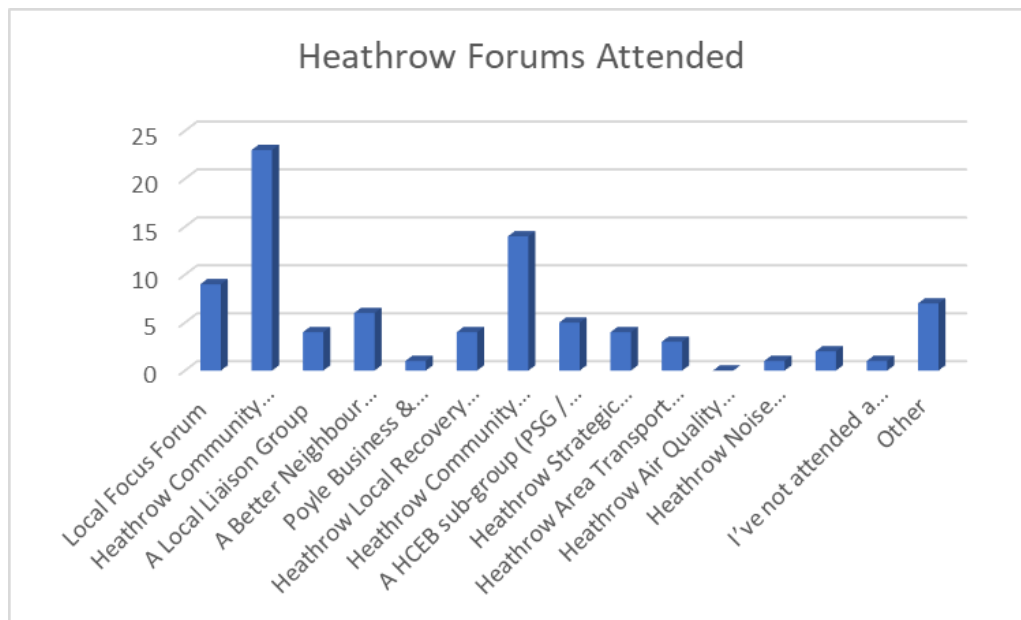
Despite these challenges, we are clear that we need to build on, and maintain, all of the good work that has been undertaken in recent years. This is why we conducted a four-week consultation between 13<sup>th</sup> January- 12<sup>th</sup> February, in order to gain feedback to help inform our plans. We recognise the value of the input that many of our communities and local stakeholders have provided and we want to thank each of you for taking the time to share your views.

We received a wide range of feedback, and although this report only provides a high-level summary of the feedback, we have taken account of each response received.

It is likely there will be changes to the number and structure of our community forums and meetings going forward. It is important to us that we listen to a broad and balanced range of voices from different stakeholders across our local areas. Heathrow remains fully committed to engaging with our local communities and we want to work collaboratively with you and other local stakeholders on the issues that matter the most.

### Who responded to our consultation?





In total we received 38 responses to our community forums and meetings review consultation.

We asked for feedback on a range of topics, including why stakeholders attend our current forums, what has been done well in previous engagement and what could be improved in the future, as well as asking stakeholders to comment on our new proposed Code of Conduct and Principles of Engagement to be applied to all future community meetings.

All the feedback we have gathered is extremely valuable and will help shape plans for how Heathrow’s community forums and engagement will look in the future.

As you can see from the chart to the left, we have received feedback from a variety of stakeholders.

The majority of stakeholders shared that the reasons they attend Heathrow’s current forums were because they want to be kept informed and to find out more about the airport’s operations. There was also a high percentage who attended in order to offer a community voice and to challenge and influence Heathrow’s decisions.

## Should Heathrow consider using an independent chair for larger forums?

78% of stakeholders felt that Heathrow should consider using an independent chair for larger community forum meetings. There was a strong consensus that having an independent chair would enable meetings to feel more transparent and therefore more productive.

Some stakeholders felt that having an independent chair would provide balance, transparency and give attendees confidence that meetings were not being motivated by a specific Heathrow outcome and therefore providing a platform to hear a variety of voices. Others felt it would be beneficial to have an independent chair to improve the credibility and trust at meetings and eliminate conflict arising between Heathrow and community members.

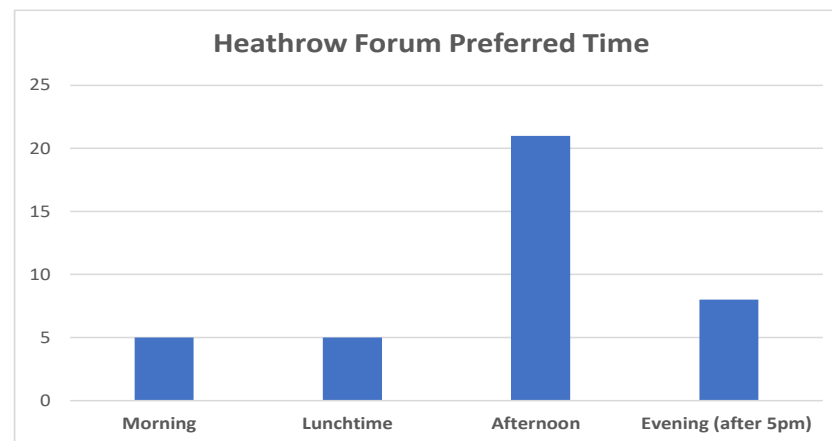
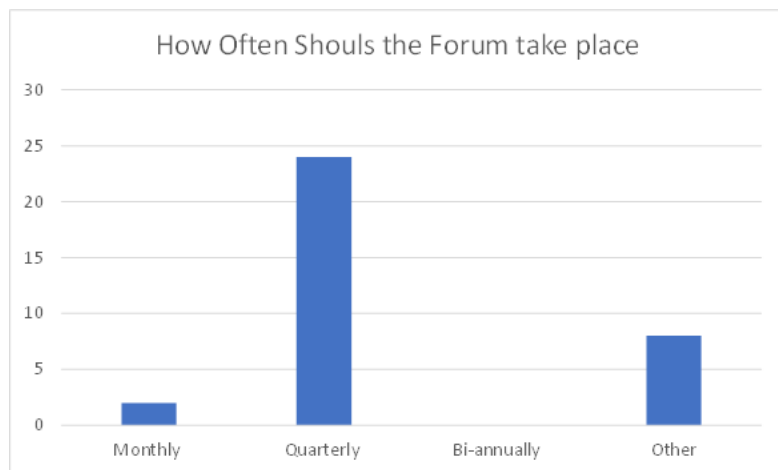
Many stakeholders offered opinions on what skills they thought were important for an independent chair to have, such as being able to strike the balance in ensuring that different viewpoints were heard, having the relevant knowledge, and the ability to follow up on any requested information effectively and ensuring a productive conversation is facilitated. Some stakeholders felt that the performance of the independent chair should be subject to regular review.

Other stakeholders felt that an independent chair wasn't a defining factor to a meeting, however agreed with the principles that all meetings should be chaired in a manner that drives inclusivity and productivity.



Word cloud generated from stakeholder feedback

### Future meetings – frequency and timings



Most stakeholders told us that they would prefer for meetings to be held on a quarterly basis, with a small number saying monthly was more appropriate, and others suggested meeting every two months.

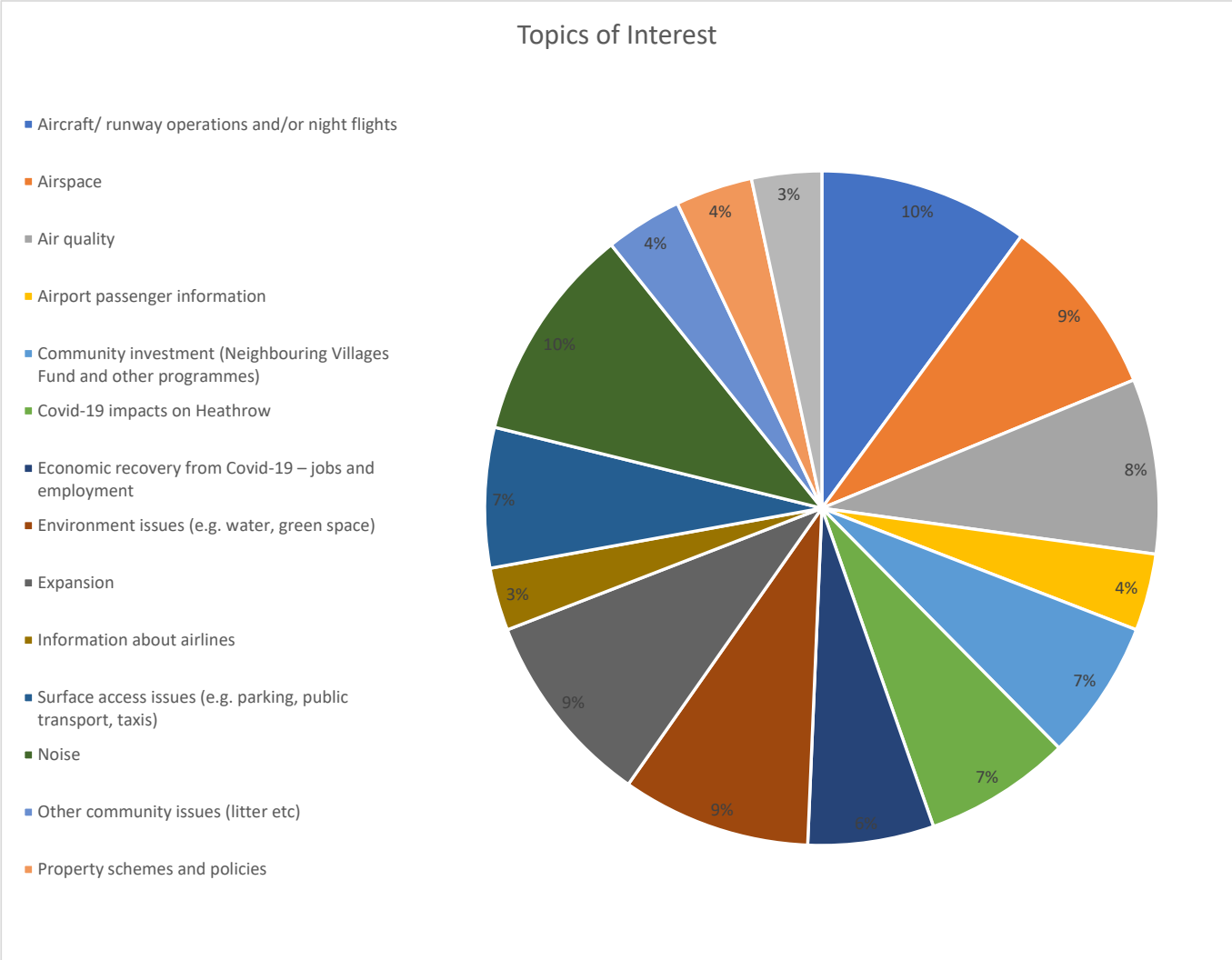
There was a strong preference for meetings to happen later in the day, with the majority of stakeholders suggesting meetings to be held in the afternoon.

Stakeholders were keen that forums covered a variety of topics, with most suggested topics being ticked on the questionnaire. Other topics that were suggested by stakeholders were education/skills, airline operations/policies and climate change.

Over half of stakeholders felt that two hours was a sufficient length of time for a meeting, with others suggesting it should take as long as it needs to get through the agenda.

The majority of stakeholders felt that a combination of both virtual and in person meetings was the most effective. Several felt that at the moment due to government guidance meetings had to be virtual and that some would continue to work best that way. However, being able to get back to communicating together in person would be positive once it is possible.





## What has worked well in previous engagement?

Several stakeholders shared that they felt Heathrow's current forums enabled them to engage with a variety of other community groups and stakeholders that they otherwise might not have the opportunity to engage with. In particular, the opportunity to be in a room with experts and stakeholders involved in the decision-making processes such as for airspace, noise, air quality.

Others said that Heathrow's Community Engagement Team were always willing and available to engage. By having a dedicated team, it has enabled Heathrow and residents to understand what can be achieved by working together.

Many stakeholders said the forums were useful for establishing an understanding of Heathrow's operations and welcomed regular updates. Others mentioned the benefit of previous site visits to operational parts of the airport.

Regular email updates informing stakeholders on operational activities was another topic that stakeholders referred to as working well, as well as information provided on the Heathrow website.

meet other stakeholders  
useful conversations  
**Noise Website HCEB**  
**Regular email updates**  
**Openness of Presenters**  
**Site Visits More informed**  
Staff willing and available to engage

*Word cloud generated by questionnaire responses*

## What hasn't worked so well?

Some stakeholders felt that in previous forum meetings there had been too much focus on a Heathrow driven agenda resulting in a lack of action and leaving little scope for interaction and not enough time for questions from community groups and local residents.

Others shared that there was a real sense of consultation fatigue and that slow response times resulting in frustration, lack of trust, and views that there is not always a genuine two-way dialogue. Some felt that there was a lack of transparency between Heathrow and its stakeholders and that was the cause of several legacy issues.

Some stakeholders felt that too many topics were covered so there was not enough time to explore them properly, that questions were not always answered and that nothing changed as a result.

Some shared that they felt forums had become a 'talking shop' as well as a space that's been overtaken by stakeholders who just want to attack Heathrow. Others felt that the ceasing of working groups had meant engagement with Heathrow was less effective.



*words cloud generated by questionnaire responses*

**At community meetings, do stakeholders think it is important to hear from a range of different speakers/ organisations outside of Heathrow?**

All stakeholders thought that it was important to include a range of different speakers and organisations from outside of Heathrow in forum meetings. The most popular suggestions being Government, particularly the Department for Transport (DfT), NATS (Air Traffic Control), Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and airlines.

Some stakeholders felt it was important when external organisations are involved in decision making for them to be part of the make-up of a forum so that there is transparency between decision makers and communities. Several stakeholders felt that by having the views of Government, local authorities and community members in one room it would enable groups to share their expertise and knowledge and help foster a more joined up approach in working together.

Others suggested that hearing from other Government departments Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra), Independent Commission Civil Aviation Noise (ICCAN), Airspace Change Organising Group (ACOG) and experts in specific fields such as engineering, aircraft manufacturing, noise, air pollution and climate change would be beneficial.

Several stakeholders felt that it was important to get the right balance between local residents and paid employees at meetings and for Heathrow not to just invite supportive partners but also organisations that will hold them to account. Several stakeholders felt that presenters should be open and honest, using accessible language, understandable by all those involved, i.e. no jargon or excessive technical details, so that all can understand and play an informed part in the meeting.

**Do stakeholders think it is important for Heathrow to engage widely with numerous stakeholders?**

The vast majority of stakeholders felt that it was important for Heathrow to be engaging with a wide and diverse range of stakeholders, although some felt that striking the right balance was difficult. Many felt that in doing so it would bring Heathrow's team a better understanding on the potential impacts at a grassroots level.

One stakeholder raised the point that Heathrow says that it wants to be a good neighbour and that one way to do that is to engage with a wide variety of stakeholders. Several others felt that given the size and impact of the airport's operation it was Heathrow's duty to engage with those closest and most impacted, and that the more Heathrow engaged the more they would understand what the communities really want.

Several stakeholders raised the importance of engagement being open and honest and that Heathrow should use language that is understandable to all. Often topics covered can be extremely technical and without the expertise or being an aviation professional is often difficult to understand. This causes frustration and a lack of transparency.

## Proposed Code of Conduct

Most stakeholders agreed with Heathrow's having a Code of Conduct to ensure a safe space for everyone to share their views and opinions.

Some stakeholders noted that the Code of Conduct should be followed by all, including industry and Heathrow representatives, something they felt hadn't always been the case in previous meetings.

Others felt that expulsion should only occur in extreme circumstances, and that a three-meeting ban or three-strike policy should also be considered.

Some members requested that the word "judgements" be removed from the last bullet point.

### Principles of Engagement

*As a member of one of Heathrow Community Engagement Forums/meetings, we request that all members agree to the following Principles of Engagement:*

*Members should:*

- *Be a nominated representative of a community group/organisation and provide written Terms of Reference of that group/organisation [one representative per organisation to attend forums]*
- *Nominate a deputy when they cannot attend*
- *Consider the wider views of the group/organisation that they represent, have established mechanisms to gather those views where necessary, and present them in a balanced way*
- *Follow up on agreed actions from meetings; disseminate meeting updates and outcomes back to the group/organisation they represent*
- *Recognise Heathrow's legal right to exist and operate within its current cap of 480,000 air traffic movements per year and to be compliant with Government aviation policy and guidance*
- *Recognise there is a balance to be struck between the environmental rights of the communities affected by Heathrow's operations, and the commercial and safety imperatives of the airport and its customers*

### Code of conduct

*As a member of one of Heathrow forums, we request that all members agree to the following code of conduct:*

*Members should:*

- *Respect and show consideration to all fellow members and to their points of view and individual differences*
- *Respect the diversity of our members' backgrounds, perspectives, education, and experiences*
- *Listen and behave courteously to each other and the Chair*
- *At all times act with honesty, integrity and transparency*
- *Recognise that discriminatory or abusive language will not be tolerated and could result in expulsion from a forum*
- *Recognise that personal attacks or judgements will not be tolerated and could result in expulsion from a forum*

## Proposed Principles of engagement

Many stakeholders felt strongly that two members from each community group/organisation should be able to attend forum meetings, in order to provide cover for one another if needed, but also to ensure that long-term knowledge is not lost and they are able to feedback often very complex information to their groups effectively.

One stakeholder felt that while nominated representatives of a community group/organisation may be preferable, there could be some instances where someone who does not meet that criteria would be a useful addition to the forum. Perhaps their addition to the forum could be agreed by the rest of the members.

One stakeholder also suggested a check should be carried out to ensure that a community group/organisation is still an active group in their community.

Several stakeholders felt that they couldn't commit to the bullet that asks members to recognise Heathrow's legal right to exist and operate within its current cap of 480,000 air traffic movements per year.

## **Next steps**

Along with our ongoing review, we are taking account of all the feedback received which will help shape the new community forum structure. We will share our proposals in the coming months, with the aim of implementing our new forums structure over the summer period.

If you have any queries or concerns you would like to raise with our team please contact us at [CommunityEngagement@heathrow.com](mailto:CommunityEngagement@heathrow.com) .