

Noise and Airspace Community Forum

Meeting notes (13 July 2022, 13:00 – 15:30, Microsoft Teams)

Confirmed attendees

Name	Borough / Organisation
Andreas Lambrianou	Chair
Cllr Luisa Sullivan	Buckinghamshire Council
Cllr Dr Wendy Matthews	Buckinghamshire Council
John Burton	CAA
Darren Rhodes	CAA
Rebecca Christie	DfT
Ian Greene	DfT
Margaret Majumdar	Ealing Aircraft Noise Action Group
Robert Buick	Englefield Green Action Group
Nigel Davies	Englefield Green Action Group
Tim Walker	Forest Hill Society
Paul Beckford	HACAN
Christine Taylor	Harmondsworth and Sipson Residents Association
Armelle Thomas	Harmondsworth and Sipson Residents Association
Becky Coffin	Heathrow
Lisa Forshew	Heathrow
Michael Glen	Heathrow
Andy Knight	Heathrow
Rick Norman	Heathrow
Jennifer Sykes	Heathrow
Richard West	Heathrow
Michael Thornton	Heathrow Strategic Planning Group
Colin Stanbury	Local Authorities Aircraft Noise Council
Cllr John Martin	London Borough of Ealing
Paul Baker	London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham
Amanda Nicholls	London Borough of Lewisham
John Coates	London Borough of Richmond upon Thames
Deborah Petty	Molesey Residents Association
David Matthews	NATS
Robin Clarke	NATS
Bridget Bell	Plane Hell Action
Graham Young	Richings Park Residents Association
Alastair Rosenschein	Richmond Heathrow Campaign
Peter Willan	Richmond Heathrow Campaign
Cllr David Hilton	Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead
Cllr Steve Bax	Surrey County Council
Sue Janota	Surrey County Council
Stephen Clark	Teddington Action Group
Dave Gilbert	Teddington Action Group
Carole Marr	Windlesham Society

Apologies

Spencer Norton	British Airways
Ben Lippitt	CAA
Paul Conway	Englefield Green Action Group
Surinderpal Suri	London Borough of Ealing
Ian Jopson	NATS
Tina Richardson	Windlesham Society

1 Welcome and Introduction

- 1.1 Andreas Lambrianou (AL) introduced himself as the forum's new independent chair and welcomed members to the virtual meeting. He expressed his excitement in taking on the role and commended his predecessor Becky Coffin (BC) for the good work that had been done so far. He hoped to build on that work as well as looking at what could be refreshed. He intended to review the forum's objectives, purpose, Terms of Reference and membership to ensure that the net was being cast as widely as possible to include all community stakeholders who might be affected by noise and airspace, to ensure that the forum had a strong mandate. He looked forward to hearing the views of members and proposed setting up a small task and finish group to look at how to refresh the forum. He said he had contacted a few members about forming a core group and was happy to respond to others who wanted to be involved. Bridget Bell (BB), Armelle Thomas (AT) and Cllr David Hilton (DH) expressed their interest. DH asked AL to provide his email address to members. **ACTION AL**
- 1.2 Armelle Thomas (AT) was disappointed that the meeting was not taking place in person. AL advised that members had polled in favour of online meetings, and he felt that it was the right decision considering the recent rise in Covid infections, but he would keep the format of future meetings under review.
- 1.3 Richard West (RW) went through the actions from the previous meeting as detailed below.
- 1.4 **CAA to provide update on Survey of Noise Attitudes (SoNA) successor (5.8).** RW noted that Dave Gilbert (DG) would be sharing his thoughts on SoNA later in the meeting and suggested that the CAA should respond after the presentation.
- 1.5 **Consider restoring the forum's working group (10.1).** Rick Norman (RN) and AL agreed that this should be informed by the outcome of the task and finish group.
- 1.6 AL asked for comments on the previous meeting notes. BB asked for the phrase "non-existence of" to be inserted (para 5.3). (The notes were updated after the meeting). DG also referred to comments about ANCON noise model validation at lower noise levels (para 5.5), and reiterated his comments about the importance of validating the model beyond 15km.
- 1.7 Paul Beckford (PB) referred to recent reports in the press about the government purportedly looking to relax night flight rules and called for more transparency on the reasons for night flight dispensations. Ian Greene (IG) assured members that the DfT had no current plans to temporarily suspend night flight rules, noting that any changes would require consultation. He added that the recent consultation on night flights had included dispensation policy and was currently going through government. RN proposed that data on night flights could be brought to the forum twice a year to coincide with the summer and winter seasons. **ACTION MG**

2 Night Flight Concerns

- 2.1 DG followed up his presentation on the impact of night flights from the previous meeting with further slides. The presentation is provided alongside the meeting notes.

- 2.2 DG asked DfT to explain the rationale for a 6.5-hour night period when people needed 8 hours of sleep. IG advised that DfT had consulted on extending the night period and had started a study on noise impacts at different times of night to inform future policy.
- 2.3 DG asked how the shoulder hours were regulated (i.e. 23:00-23:30 and 06:00-07:00). IG explained that they were regulated in the same way as other parts of the day through the use of Noise Preferential Routes (NPRs), departure gradients and departure noise limits. He added that there were also some limits on the use of louder aircraft during those times. BB responded that there were no similar limits for arrival noise and gradients.
- 2.4 DG asked when the DfT's Transport Analysis Guidance (TAG, formerly WebTAG) would be adjusted to include those impacted between 40-45dB LAeq at night. IG offered to share a presentation given to the Airspace and Noise Engagement Group (ANEG) to show how TAG was updated and the challenges involved in ensuring that the evidence used was suitably robust, noting that the requirement for strong evidence with a low margin of error fed into the low noise level issue. **ACTION IG**
- 2.5 DG asked how the impact at 40-45dB might affect Heathrow's night-time regime. IG advised that the night flight regime for the period October 2022 to October 2025 had been set out last year. He added that any new regime would be consulted on, and this was currently planned for the end of 2023.
- 2.6 PW suggested that it would be helpful to make the distinction between low noise levels and levels that affected people, noting that closing windows would reduce a level of 45dB outside to 30dB inside. He supported DG's work on low noise levels but urged him not to forget people affected by noise well above those levels.
- 2.7 AL asked DG for the source of the information shown in his presentation. DG responded that the annual night numbers were taken from CAA reports, the Night Noise Guidelines (NNG) were summarised from World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines and the TAG data was obtained through a Freedom of Information (FOI) request to the CAA.
- 2.8 DR commented that the data showing a 34% increase in the population impacted by night flights would become a 17% decrease using the Lnight noise metric. He added that the TAG data was public information, so the FOI request had not been necessary.
- 2.9 RN clarified that the WHO guidelines related to environmental noise including road and rail, so any policy discussion around an 8-hour night period would also need to consider the implications for the numbers affected by road and rail noise.
- 2.10 Peter Willan (PW) was concerned that the number of flights over Richmond from 06:00-07:00 had increased. BB added that arrivals start coming over SE London as early as 04:15. AT suggested that night flights were not vital at Heathrow because Frankfurt airport was successful without them. RN responded that flights at Frankfurt started at 05:00. He acknowledged that over the last 20 years there had been an increase in movements from 06:00-07:00 but also noted that there used to be flights as early as 03:30 but those had moved to 04:30, so there were a lot of nuances in the points being raised. He advised members to read Heathrow's night flights consultation response, noting that it was the DfT's role to set policy after considering all of the views.

- 2.11 Carole Marr (CM) referred to Heathrow's previously proposed Independent Parallel Approaches (IPA) project, noting that its purpose was to accommodate even more arrivals from 06:00-07:00. She said that IPA would be incorporated into Heathrow's airspace modernisation plans but that nobody knew what that would look like, expressing concern that it would result in aircraft flying in semicircles at very low heights.
- 2.12 AL responded that the group would pick up on some of the issues raised through working groups and other methods. **ACTION AL**
- 2.13 DG commented that people were woken by individual events and not by average noise levels, so a distinction had to be made between loudness metrics such as N60 and average noise levels such as L_{Aeq} , noting that TAG used L_{Aeq} levels. He asked if CAA excluded data below 51dB. DR confirmed that 51dB was set in government policy. AL asked DG to detail the issue in an email and he would forward it to DfT. **ACTION DG/AL**

3 SoNA Redesign Learnings

- 3.1 DG gave a presentation on the learnings from the Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise (ICCAN) study to design a new SoNA, where he had been an advisory board member along with other stakeholders from the industry including Darren Rhodes from CAA. He commented that the study had shown the existing SoNA 2014 study had several flaws including not extending to low enough noise levels, not being undertaken in summer, not covering one of the most impacted flightpaths and not asking annoyance questions at the beginning of the 35-minute survey. He noted these should be corrected in future surveys and that SoNA 2014 annoyance levels should be changed by 3-6dB. He added that the learnings suggested that SoNA 2014 was less robust than the WHO 2018 recommendations. The presentation is provided alongside the meeting notes.
- 3.2 DG pointed out that nobody on the easterly DET route had been sampled for the study. Margaret Majumdar (MM) and Carol Marr (CM) added that their areas had also been excluded because they were affected by easterly operations and only overflown for 30% of the year. SC added that there had recently been five consecutive days of easterly operations with a large number of departures on the DET route after 22:00. DR responded that CAA had not selected which postcodes were selected for the study, explaining that Ipsos Mori had randomly selected people from a list of postcodes affected by noise levels above 51dB.
- 3.3 John Burton (JB) advised that the CAA was gathering as much information as possible to help inform the design of the successor to SoNA, including learnings from the former Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise (ICCAN), and that the points raised today had been noted. He added that the CAA hoped to engage with key stakeholders on design principles for the new study in 2022 Q4 or 2023 Q1.
- 3.4 AL offered to write to JB with a summary of the points raised after he had consulted with colleagues. **ACTION AL**

4 Other Community Matters

- 4.1 PW recalled that many years ago A320 aircraft had been found to produce a whining noise. He thought the problem had been solved but had recently started to hear the noise again. RN advised that the solution involved fitting a vortex deflector over the fuel over pressure protection valve cavity on the underside of the wing of the aircraft. He advised that Heathrow had been closely monitoring the number of aircraft that had been retrofitted until 2019 and it had been in the high 80th percentile. He committed to come back with more recent figures. **ACTION RN**

- 4.2 Robert Buick (RB) asked why late running flights had been using the southern runway last week. Andy Knight (AK) advised that this was due to runway intervention works. He noted that members had previously been informed of the work and provided a [link](#) to details on the Heathrow website.
- 4.3 Wendy Matthews (WM) noted that her area was not overflowed but was still affected by noise from both departures and arrivals. She asked for an update on the deployment of a system called ANEEM to measure community noise exposure. Michael Glen (MG) advised that ANEEM was in the process of being deployed and he would provide a progress update at a future forum. **ACTION MG**
- 4.4 PB noted that HACAN had received more complaints over the last couple of months from areas as far away as Harrow and Croydon about an increase in noise levels, flight numbers and potentially lower aircraft. He was unsure whether it was because people had got used to less noise over the last two years or whether there was an issue that needed to be addressed. RN responded that one of the aspirations for Heathrow's Noise and Track Keeping (NTK) system was to identify any potential changes before they were raised. He noted that it was a laborious data driven exercise and would not be possible at the moment while staff were being called into the operation to help support passengers, but it was something that could be looked at in the longer term.
- 4.5 AT said that there had been an increase in low, noisy go-arounds over her area. MG explained that go-arounds were a safety procedure, so it was not possible to ask airlines to stop. However he noted that Heathrow was looking into the reasons behind them to see if any improvements could be made. RN suggested that statistics on go-arounds could form part of the data that was reported to the forum. **ACTION MG**

5 Operational Update

- 5.1 MG provided an operational update covering the latest noise Key Performance Indicator (KPI) data, track keeping and late running flights. The presentation is provided alongside the meeting notes.
- 5.2 MG noted that Continuous Climb Operations (CCO) compliance had improved during the pandemic but had now declined as the airport got busier, with some departures more restricted at 6,000ft to avoid the lower levels of the holding stacks. DG observed that the KPIs did not include noise levels. AL responded that he was in talks with RN about what other data could be reported to the forum. **ACTION AL/RN**
- 5.3 MG explained that an aircraft is deemed off track if it leaves the Noise Preferential Route (NPR) before reaching 4,000ft above sea level. He noted that WebTrak (available [here](#)) shows which aircraft are off track, although it can sometimes take up to an hour for the data to be processed. BB pointed out that measuring above sea level did not take account of those living on higher ground. MG acknowledged this but explained that the procedure was written in regulation and was the same for all airports with NPRs.
- 5.4 MG discussed the operational challenges currently causing late running flights, such as the closure of Ukraine airspace, regulations across Europe and resourcing issues. He noted that collaborative work was taking place to reduce the number of late runners. He added that some aircraft were being night stopped but that had its own challenges, such as the availability of hotel rooms and the knock-on delays caused by aircraft being out of position and adding the passengers back into the security flow the following day. AT disputed this, stating that there was nothing but hotels from Harmondsworth to Hounslow. However, Rebecca Christie (RC) confirmed that hotel capacity was an issue across all airports due to the recent surge in demand, noting that CAA and DfT had welfare responsibilities for passengers.

- 5.5 MG reminded members that more information about night flights was available on the Heathrow website [here](#).

6 Lessons Learned: Response to Taylor Airey's PBN Report

- 6.1 Lisa Forshew (LF) presented Heathrow's response to Taylor Airey's review of global Performance Based Navigation (PBN) implementation, setting out the recommendations and identifying the most applicable lessons for Heathrow. The presentation is provided alongside the meeting notes.
- 6.2 SC quoted from the Taylor Airey report that "the overarching policy objectives of PBN must be clearly articulated" (page 15) and that "UK government policy offers no definitive statement on the preference for flight path dispersion/concentration" (page 17). He called for a reliable evidence base and warned that Heathrow was currently designing routes in a policy vacuum. LF advised that the policy issue had been covered at the previous meeting.
- 6.3 DH agreed with the finding that poor consultation was damaging but cautioned that good consultation on its own would not solve the problem, as there also had to be a process of managing noise that was fair on how it was distributed. DG suggested that most complaints came from people under concentrated flight paths and that no amount of consultation would change that.

7 Airspace Modernisation Methods and Metrics Update

- 7.1 This presentation is provided alongside the meeting notes but there was no time to go through it at the meeting. Jenni Sykes (JS) explained that the presentation outlined the Methods and Metrics engagement session that took place last week. She thanked those who attended for a really constructive session and said she was expecting to receive the independent meeting notes shortly. She confirmed that the meeting note would be shared with members and asked for any questions about the presentation to be sent to airspace@heathrow.com.

8 AOB

- 8.1 AL suspended AOB due to lack of time and thanked members for attending.

Date of next meeting

Wednesday 19 October 2022 (1:00pm – 4:00pm)