

Noise and Airspace Community Forum (NACF)

Summary Minutes (25 September 2024, 13:00-16:00, Radisson RED)

These summary minutes are not intended to be a verbatim record of the meeting, but a summary of the topics and views of forum members and a note of any actions agreed. They should be read in conjunction with a copy of the presentations given at the meeting.

Confirmed attendees

Name	Borough / Organisation
Andreas Lambrianou	Chair
Cllr Guy Gillbe *	Bracknell Forest Council
Spencer Norton	British Airways
Vinod Patel	British Airways
Ben Lippitt	CAA
Stuart Lindsey	CAA
Abigail Grenfell	CAA
Laura Keith	CISHA
Margaret Majumdar	Ealing Aircraft Noise Action Group
Robert Buick	Englefield Green Action Group
Paul Conway	Englefield Green Action Group
Nigel Davies	Englefield Green Action Group
Tim Walker *	Forest Hill Society
Matthew Bell	Frontier Economics
Matt Parry	Frontier Economics
Nick Woolley *	Frontier Economics
Paul Beckford *	HACAN
Christine Taylor	Harmondsworth and Sipson Residents Association
Armelle Thomas	Harmondsworth and Sipson Residents Association
Lisa Forshew	Heathrow
Mike Glen *	Heathrow
Lisa Forshew	Heathrow
Jennifer Sykes	Heathrow
James Mackenzie	Heathrow
Pierre Sohier	Heathrow
Hannah Burgess *	Heathrow
Richard West	Heathrow
Michael Thornton *	Heathrow Strategic Planning Group
Dr John Lees *	Iver Village Residents Association
Colin Stanbury *	Local Authorities Aircraft Noise Council
Cllr John Martin	London Borough of Ealing
Surinderpal Suri	London Borough of Ealing
Amanda Nicholls *	London Borough of Lewisham
Christian Hughes *	Longford Residents Association
Deborah Petty	Molesey Residents Association
David Matthews *	NATS
Jane Johnston *	NATS
Bridget Bell	Plane Hell Action
Neil Maybin	Richmond Heathrow Campaign
Peter Willan	Richmond Heathrow Campaign
Cllr Sean Beatty *	Spelthorne Borough Council
Dave Gilbert	Teddington Action Group
Stephen Clark	Teddington Action Group

Ben Fenech
Cllr Mark Howard *

UKHSA
Windsor & Maidenhead

Apologies

David Hilton	Ascot Parish Council
Wendy Matthews	Buckinghamshire Council
John Burton	CAA
Darren Rhodes	CAA
Ian Greene	DfT
Gary Marshall	DfT
Robin Clarke	NATS
Graham Young	Richings Park Residents Association
Cllr Andrea Berardi	Runnymede Borough Council

1 Welcome and Introduction

- 1.1 Andreas Lambrianou (AL) welcomed members to the forum and noted apologies for absence. He advised that the previous summary minutes had now been finalised.
- 1.2 AL provided updates on the actions from the previous meeting as detailed below.
- 1.3 **Provide examples of community claims of experiencing 20 hours of overflight with no respite (2.5).** Paul Beckford (PB) advised that he was in dialogue with HACAN members from the Cranford area.
- 1.4 **Consider including the number of flights in the shoulder period (23:00-23:30) on the data dashboard (2.6).** Mike Glen (MG) agreed to consider providing the data on an annual basis, but it would not be added to the dashboard as there were no targets associated with that time period.
- 1.5 Margaret Majumdar (MM) proposed there should be a formal item to approve the minutes as the forum was a statutory body and a sub-committee of the Council for the Independent Scrutiny of Heathrow Airport (CISHA). AL advised that NACF was not a statutory body or a sub-committee of CISHA and explained that he was responsible for the final sign off of the summary minutes.
- 1.6 Peter Willan (PW) was frustrated that his proposed amendments to the minutes had not been fully implemented, such as his observation that the CAA's Departure Noise Mitigation Review (2018) stated that Heathrow's height and gradient controls had not kept pace with changes in the fleet and noise levels could be reduced with an upgrade of the controls. He added that he had never heard of the term summary minutes. AL advised that he used summary minutes in a number of bodies that he chaired, noting they were intended to be read alongside the presentations which contained more information. Paul Conway (PC) suggested members could submit a condensed summary of their comments to assist with the minutes. AL explained that the summary minutes were intended to describe key points and any agreements that were reached but not to provide a verbatim record of the meeting. PW expressed dissatisfaction at the response.
- 1.7 Armelle Thomas (AT) noted that communities could not see the work being done by their representatives if it was not captured in the minutes. AL acknowledged this and offered to select a couple of community members to meet with to reach a place where members were happy about the minutes. **ACTION AL**

2 Data Dashboard

- 2.1 MG presented Heathrow's data dashboard for August 2024. The dashboard can be downloaded from the [Heathrow website](#). He noted that there were currently around 12 daily pre-06:00 arrivals and that so far in 2024 there had been 119 nights without late running flights after 23:30. He added that he was leaving Heathrow so this would be his last NACF. AL led members in thanking him for his time and effort at the forum.
- 2.2 MG advised that 43 departures failed to reach the required height of 1,000ft at 6.5km from the start of roll during August. Debbie Petty (DP) ask what analysis was carried out on these infringements. MG explained that the aircraft type, airline and where it failed were analysed on a weekly basis and presented to airlines. He noted that heavier aircraft were more likely to fail and there were more failures during warm weather, but the overall number was low compared to the total number of departures.
- 2.3 MG advised that track keeping across all routes was 98% excluding the easterly CPT route, or 96.8% including it. Nigel Davies (ND) thought that Virgin Atlantic's track keeping on the CPT route was poor. MG recapped that the CPT 09R route was challenging to manage and the issues were well known to the forum, noting that Virgin Atlantic was no different to other airlines. ND disagreed so MG offered to look at what data could be provided. **ACTION MG**
- 2.4 Christian Hughes (CH) asked for historic figures of the number of departures from the northern runway (09L) on easterly operations. MG responded with the following figures (via chat): 119 (2018), 126 (2019), 2733 (2020), 5282 (2021), 166 (2022), 400 (2023), 374 (2024 YTD). He noted that the spike in 2020/21 was due to runway works during Covid and the spike in 2023/24 was also due to runway works. CH added (via chat) that the issue for Longford residents was that easterly 09L departures resulted in a huge amount of low frequency noise and vibration as well as additional air pollution. He expressed concern at the lack of low frequency and vibration monitoring in the village against which a baseline model could be generated for future comparison, with assumptions projected against computer generated models rather than actual data from the location impacted. James Mackenzie (JM) explained (via chat) that the noise models were calibrated and verified using actual measurement data from the many noise monitors around the airport. He added that the ERCD (CAA's consulting branch), who generate the models and outputs, review the measured noise data annually to ensure that the computer models reflect the actual data.
- 2.5 Mark Howard (MH) asked how Heathrow approached airlines. MG explained that Heathrow had a good working relationship with airlines, that they were aware of the noise requirements laid out in the Aeronautical Information Publication (AIP) and that Heathrow regularly analysed various metrics and overall compliance and presented the information to airlines. MH asked what ultimate sanction Heathrow could give to repeat offenders that constantly stretched the rules. MG explained that he had never found himself in a position where an airline was unwilling to work with Heathrow.

3 Deep Dive: Health Update

- 3.1 Matt Parry (MP) of Frontier Economics presented the findings of their report entitled Health Impacts of Aircraft Noise commissioned by the NACF chair. He advised they had been tasked with assessing whether the Transport Appraisal Guidance (TAG) on the

health effects of aircraft noise needed updating. They undertook a literature review and found that sleep disturbance was the only health condition currently included in the TAG modelling which could be updated, to reflect increased noise effects. They also found that, of health conditions outside the current TAG modelling, cognitive effect on children was the only one that could be included in future TAG modelling. He advised that the report should not be used in isolation, but instead should feed into a wider review on TAG guidance. The full report was circulated to members after the meeting.

- 3.2 Stephen Clark (CD) asked why annoyance was excluded from the scope. AL explained that the scope of work was necessarily restricted due to resources and was not intended to be a fully comprehensive study.
- 3.3 Dave Gilbert (DG) noted that there was sufficient evidence to suggest that baseline night noise in the modelling could be lowered from 45dB to 40dB and hoped the authorities would take this into account and reduce the number of flights allowed at night. Surinderpal Suri (SS) asked what had led Frontier Economics to that conclusion. MP explained that it was primarily from the World Health Organization 2018 guidelines and noted that a full list of papers was provided in the report.
- 3.4 ND was appalled that the cognitive effects on children were not included in the current TAG modelling.
- 3.5 Margaret Majumdar (MM) noted that sleep disturbance was important and warranted further research but added that it should also include disturbance in getting to sleep in the first place. Matthew Bell (MB) explained that this would be included in the sleep disturbance metric. PW added that pattern of sleep was also important, highlighting that some residents were woken by arrivals between 04:00 and 06:00 and the number of awakenings made a difference.
- 3.6 Ben Fenech (BF) gave a presentation on the relationship between aviation noise exposure, noise annoyance and other health effects. He noted that he was speaking as a subject matter expert, not to give the consensus view of government. He explained that there were multiple pathways through which aviation noise affected long-term physical and mental health and that the current evidence suggested that efforts to reduce both noise exposure and annoyance were warranted. He noted that the emerging evidence suggested that certain individuals were at higher risk of adverse effects: e.g. people with cardiovascular and psychological diseases. However, there were still many unknowns, and the health evidence did not provide all the answers. The presentation was circulated to members before the meeting.
- 3.7 Paul Beckford (PB) summarised some of the issues covered so far. He suggested that the quality of the values that inform TAG around the cost of health impacts could be improved, noting that the total costs of sleep disturbance and annoyance were not really known. He said he would welcome enhanced understanding around the effects on cognitive development of children. He highlighted the proposal that the baseline night noise in the modelling could be lowered to 40dB. He noted that late night and early morning flights were the most disturbing, so the health impact must be largest in those periods and asked if anything could be done to reduce harm in those periods. He also highlighted mental health impacts triggered by aircraft noise. He added that there were gaps in the research and would like to focus on where further research would be most beneficial.
- 3.8 AL observed that someone appeared to be recording the meeting on their phone. He reminded attendees that recording was not permitted as the forum did not have agreement from everyone so it would be illegal.

- 3.9 Robert Buick (RB) noted that the social cost of noise in France in 2023 was €42.bn, way above the figure provided by TAG. SC felt that TAG was not fit for purpose and asked why airspace modernisation decisions were being made in advance of the Aviation Noise Attitudes Survey (ANAS) and Aviation Night Noise Effects (ANNE) study. DP added that it was important for research to be planned in for Airspace Modernisation and to look at what could be taken from those studies as a baseline. PW noted that when an impact assessment is carried out some items cannot be monetised. BF worried that monetisation would always point to concentration as the health impact would be smaller, so while it was important to keep updating TAG it would not provide all the answers.
- 3.10 AT stated that Lord Darzi had been commissioned by the Government to write about the state of the NHS and had said that if a business profits at the expense of our health, it should pay the societal cost. She said she had been calling for the polluter pays principle for many years. She noted that Hillingdon was the second worst borough for heart disease and asked why the UKHSA did not survey villages around Heathrow which had been under stress for twenty-two years because the airport wanted to destroy them. BF explained that studies required hundreds of thousands of participants to show a link, so it was impossible to go to small villages to find out if noise was linked to heart attacks.
- 3.11 SC stated that Air Navigation Guidance 2017 (ANG) acknowledged that high levels of noise have a differential effect and that we should be looking at health impacts and not numbers in contours. He highlighted the dramatic reaction in the US from people under highly concentrated flight paths and expressed concern about using TAG knowing it could lead to concentration. He also thought aircraft should be flying higher. SS added that concentrated flight paths increased noise exposure and there must be a sustainable and acceptable limit. Bridget Bell (BB) said that she had moved house to avoid concentration and highlighted the plight of Londoners living under concentrated flight paths who only got five hours sleep. She called for fair and equitable distribution to share the burden, noting that many residents were not in a position to move away, particularly those in social housing. She added that evidence from the US and Canada should be considered.
- 3.12 SS noted that coping with noise may lead to depression and mental health issues as people feel a lack of control. He added that people had different sensitivities, so it was not possible to define the level at which they become annoyed. Christine Taylor (CT) noted that the link with depression was a Catch-22 as people get depressed by noise, but if they're depressed then they're more likely to be annoyed by noise. She added that the NHS Our Future Health programme was looking to collect health information from five million volunteers and asked if that would help. AT highlighted comments in CISHA's noise complaints process review about callers threatening suicide. She said DfT had referred to health as an ambition, but it should trump every other consideration, not only affecting those overflown but also those who were affected by noise 24/7 from take-offs, landings, noise from the airport and engine testing.
- 3.13 PB stated that in an ideal world there would be health-based targets in policy. He noted that mental health was a major issue as it is so difficult to measure. He added that there were many research gaps and limited budgets, so if the forum could agree on the top three issues for further research that would be a powerful output.

4 Proposed UK Airspace Design Service

- 4.1 Stuart Lindsey (SL) briefed members on the proposal for a UK Airspace Design Service (UKADS) responsible for designing UK airspace. He noted this had previously been known as the Single Design Entity (SDE). He advised that a joint consultation by DfT

and CAA would occur later in 2024 to seek views on what the UKADS could do and how it might be set up. He stressed that no decisions had yet been made.

- 4.2 DP asked how large the proposed department would be and whether its independence would be compromised by funding. SL acknowledged there was not a surfeit of resource so UKADS would be able to avail itself to external services, however this would form part of the consultation. He added that there would be a user pays principle with funding similar to CAA funding from the en-route fee which is paid by airlines to Eurocontrol and redistributed without knowing who paid or how much so that impartiality was protected. SS asked why they would not adopt the polluter pays principle. SL clarified that he meant the airspace user and commented that without casting aspersions airspace users tended to be the polluters so by default they would be the ones who paid.
- 4.3 Michael Thornton (MT) asked (via chat) if the masterplan would have to be completed before any new individual CAP1616 process could progress. SL advised that the masterplan already existed in four clusters and as each cluster advanced through the stages of the CAP1616 process they would have to produce a new iteration of the masterplan.
- 4.4 PW wondered if the CAA was recognising problems with the Airspace Change Organising Group (ACOG) and the masterplan and suggested it was changing from a bottom-up to a top-down approach. SL responded that no criticism of ACOG was implied, noting that ACOG had no power to direct, so this was recognising a deficiency in that process. He disagreed that it was changing to a top-down approach as it would bring together all the design principles collected locally.
- 4.5 AT asked if there were any plans to bring back a body such as the Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise (ICCAN). SL said this was a question for the DfT not the CAA.
- 4.6 BB asked why Gatwick Airport had been allowed to change their joining point rules without consultation. SL explained that it had gone to judicial review, it was not an airspace change and that was what led directly to Planned and Permanent Distribution (PPR). He added that Gatwick has reverted its joining point as a consequence.
- 4.7 SC asked to what extent SL was involved with the use of lower airspace at airports such as concentration and managed dispersion. SL explained that it was not part of his remit. Jennifer Sykes (JS) added that UKADS would be responsible for developing the low level airspace design. SL added that there was no intention to put UKADS inside CAA.

5 Community Questions

- 5.1 ND reiterated his comments on the cognitive effects on children, noting that research takes time and key decisions on airspace change would be taken before having evidence. He asked what AL could do about it. AL responded that he had no power, but the forum provided the opportunity to highlight the issues and concerns of forum members. ND noted the absence of DfT due to a diary clash and AL assured him that they would receive the summary minutes.
- 5.2 DG commented that he was seeking input from Darren Rhodes (DR) on noise modelling. AL said he would try to arrange a meeting with DR as discussed. **ACTION AL**

6 Easterly Alternation Infrastructure

- 6.1 Hannah Burgess (HB) gave an update on community engagement on the new ground infrastructure required to Heathrow's northern runway to enable Easterly Alternation. She advised that seven community events had taken place alongside an awareness campaign to inform local communities via postcards, social media and the website. She added that Heathrow intended to submit a planning application to the London Borough of Hillingdon before the end of the year, after which Hillingdon would complete a statutory public consultation on the submission.
- 6.2 SC asked when communities would be told about changes to flight paths and respite. HB explained that Heathrow was required to carry out an Environmental Impact Assessment as part of the planning application and that would include noise modelling and the change in impact on local communities.
- 6.3 RB asked if changes to flight paths would have to go through the CAP1616 process. JS said she would answer this during the next agenda item. PW said he had attended one of the community events and was told that the planning application was for flight paths using the existing Standard Instrument Departure (SID) routes. He was baffled that there were two processes and questioned how it could result in a valid decision. AT added that a local resident who had attended felt the information provided had been less than helpful.
- 6.4 SS asked how many properties would be offered noise mitigation. HB advised that this was still being determined and would be included in the planning application. BB asked if Hillingdon could refuse the planning application. HB confirmed that they could but noted that Heathrow had previously been granted planning permission for the project.

7 Update on Heathrow Projects

- 7.1 JS discussed the relative timelines for Easterly Alternation, UKADS and Airspace Modernisation, noting that most of the dates were outside of Heathrow's control and subject to change. Concerning Easterly Alternation, she advised that Heathrow was essentially looking to use the existing airspace infrastructure as there were already flight paths in place for taking off from the northern runway (09L) during easterly operations. She noted that if Heathrow started another airspace change to redesign those routes it could conflict with Airspace Modernisation.
- 7.2 DP asked if those flight paths would be made clear in the planning application. JS confirmed they would. DP asked Heathrow to notify members when the planning application had been submitted. HB confirmed that members would be informed.
- 7.3 SC asked how Airspace Modernisation would be taken forward at Stage 3 of the CAP1616 process and at what stage Heathrow would start narrowing down the options. JS advised that the upcoming UKADS consultation would propose that UKADS take on the Stage 3 designs for the London cluster.
- 7.4 SC asked to see a detailed plan and timescales for Stage 3. JS advised that when a detailed plan was ready it would be shared with the forum.

Date of Next Meeting

Wed 27 Nov 2024 (13:00-16:00) – London Heathrow Marriott, Bath Road, Hayes UB3 5AN.