

Noise and Airspace Community Forum (NACF)

Summary Minutes (27 November 2024, 13:00-16:00, Heathrow Marriott)

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
Wendy Matthews	Buckinghamshire Council
Stuart Lindsey *	CAA
Colin Scott *	CAA
Darren Rhodes *	CAA
John Burton *	CAA
Laura Keith	CISHA
Ian Greene *	DfT
Gary Marshall *	DfT
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
Paul Beckford	HACAN
Christine Taylor	Harmondsworth and Sipson Residents Association
Armelle Thomas	Harmondsworth and Sipson Residents Association
Lisa Forshew	Heathrow
Samantha Fountain	Heathrow
Alana Godfrey	Heathrow
James Mackenzie	Heathrow
Pierre Sohier	Heathrow
Jennifer Sykes	Heathrow
Richard West	Heathrow
Michael Thornton *	Heathrow Strategic Planning Group
Cllr John Martin	London Borough of Ealing
Megan Kidd	London Borough of Richmond upon Thames
Christian Hughes *	Longford Residents Association
Deborah Petty	Molesey Residents Association
David Matthews *	NATS
Peter Willan	Richmond Heathrow Campaign
Robert Tudway	Richmond Heathrow Campaign
Cllr Mark Howard	Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead
Cllr Andrea Berardi *	Runnymede Borough Council
Kathleen Croft	Stanwell Moor Resident's Association
Maryann Morgan	Sunninghill & Ascot Parish Council
Dave Gilbert	Teddington Action Group
Stephen Clark	Teddington Action Group

Apologies

Cllr Sean Beatty
Graham Young

Spelthorne Council
Richings Park Residents Association

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 **Chair to discuss the level of detail in summary minutes with community members (1.7).** AL noted that Paul Conway (PC) had subsequently not anticipated the need for a meeting. Armelle Thomas (AT) commented that minutes needed to be accurate and lengthy enough to keep communities informed of the issues raised by community members.
- 1.4 **Query about Virgin Atlantic track keeping (2.3).** Nigel Davis (ND) advised that this was not currently an issue.
- 1.5 **Darren Rhodes (DR) and Dave Gilbert (DG) to discuss noise modelling (5.2).** AL confirmed that dialogue was in ongoing.

2 Data Dashboard

- 2.1 Samantha Fountain (SF) presented the Operations Dashboard for October 2024. The dashboard is available on Heathrow's website [here](#). She noted that there had been 160 nights without late runners so far in 2024 (to 19th November), exceeding last year's annual total of 144 nights.
- 2.2 Margaret Majumdar (MM) commented that the figure was encouraging but still unacceptable. She pointed out that most late running flights were dispensed and suggested that the dispensation regime needed tightening. She added that early morning arrivals before 06:00 were unacceptable, noting that Sarah Olney MP had recently stated in the House of Commons that allowing night flights should be reviewed. Ian Greene (IG) responded that DfT had consulted on the dispensation rules and new guidance came into effect last month, noting that there were no major changes. He added that the new night flight regime due to commence in October 2025 was expected to be published before Christmas.
- 2.3 SF explained that the night flight dispensations over the summer were due to widespread and prolonged disruption caused by weather conditions locally and across Europe. Wendy Matthews (WM) asked the reason for the non-dispensed late runners. SF explained these would have been for any reason that did not meet the criteria for dispensation such as technical issues with aircraft. Christine Taylor (CT) recalled that one of the reasons for dispensing flights included insufficient hotel accommodation for passengers. SF acknowledged this had to be factored in but would be a last resort. AL suggested a future agenda item on the topic. **ACTION SF**
- 2.4 AT stated that communities should not have to sacrifice their sleep for late running flights. She noted that Heathrow had agreed to consider providing data on the number of flights in the shoulder period (23:00-23:30) on an annual basis (*NACF 25/09/2024*)

- 1.4). She criticised the use of the phrase “noise-free nights” at a recent CISHA meeting, noting that there were no noise-free nights for those who lived around the airport. She added that an aircraft had performed multiple overflights on 28 October.
- 2.5 Peter Willan (PW) commented that the data dashboard did not show the number of flights from 06:00-07:00. He added that in previous discussions on night flights he had proposed that flights from 06:00-07:00 should be moved into the daytime and he would like to be involved in the formulation of such a policy. AL reminded him that the proposal had been discussed in previous NACF meetings and the responses from Heathrow colleagues highlighted differing views on the issue.
- 2.6 Deborah Petty (DP) asked if the airlines responsible for 1,000ft infringements were the same as those responsible for 4% climb gradient infringements and asked how Heathrow aimed to improve engagement with airlines. SF acknowledged that Heathrow was currently talking to one particular airline and explained that the new airline engagement metric in Heathrow’s Fly Quieter and Greener (FQG) programme should lead to increased engagement.

3 Deep Dive: Heathrow’s Noise Action Plan 2024-2028

- 3.1 Pierre Sohier (PS) and James Mackenzie (JM) presented Heathrow’s newly published Noise Action Plan (NAP) for the period 2024 to 2028 following its adoption by DEFRA in October. The NAP is available on Heathrow’s website [here](#).
- 3.2 PS advised that Heathrow had received 876 responses to the NAP consultation in 2023 following a publicity campaign that reached over 1.3 million people through social media, over 1.9 million audio impressions through local radio channels and 300,000 local business and homes by postcard. He explained that the NAP was aligned with the Heathrow 2.0 sustainability strategy to reduce annoyance and sleep disturbance by 10% by 2030 compared to 2019, to introduce Easterly Alternation by 2028, to implement a voluntary ban on flights between 00:00 and 04:30 from 2025 (except for dispensed operations), to incentivise the use of Chapter 14 aircraft, to ensure at least 150 nights without aircraft after 23:30 from 2025, and to achieve 80% take-up of Heathrow’s Residential Insulation Scheme (RIS).
- 3.3 AT asked why the consultation had received so few responses compared to the number reached and why the target for nights without late runners was only 150. PS explained that the consultation responses included representative responses from pressure groups, local authorities and MPs and that 876 was far higher than the usual number received. He considered that 150 nights without late runners was a reasonable target considering the external factors involved. Cllr Mark Howard (MH) asked if the target meant no aircraft at all, including dispensed or emergency flights. PS confirmed that it meant no flights at all. Wendy Matthews (WM) asked where these actions were mentioned in the NAP. JM advised that the target of at least 150 nights without late runners was covered in Action 8A and the voluntary ban from 00:00 was covered in Action 8C.
- 3.4 DG asked if the target to reduce annoyance and sleep disturbance by 10% was reasonable. PS explained that based on forecasts for 2030 considering changes in aircraft and rules it may be possible to reach 15%, so 10% was a conservative target. DG asked if the introduction of Easterly Alternation had been factored in. JM advised that Heathrow had looked at scenarios both with and without Easterly Alternation.
- 3.5 Michael Thornton (MT) asked what the consequences would be for Heathrow if the key targets were not met. PS advised that the KPIs would be audited. DP noted that the CAA

was carrying out a review of Noise Action Plans and asked if there would be scope to improve the targets if the CAA found them to be unacceptable. John Burton (JB) explained that the scope of that review was to investigate the efficiency and effectiveness of Noise Action Plans as a method of noise management, not the content of airport-specific plans.

- 3.6 SC commented that the NAP was well written and a good source of information. He welcomed the plan to commission an independent survey of noise attitudes around Heathrow by 2026 and asked if it could be brought forward. JM noted that Heathrow was also keen to carry out the survey as soon as possible and was currently in the process of formulating a high-level proposal but it would need input from various expert bodies. AL asked if it would be carried out in time to impact Airspace Modernisation. Jennifer Sykes (JS) advised that Airspace Modernisation still had a long way to go and there would be room for input all the way up to consultation and beyond, noting that local circumstances were written into the CAP1616 process. DG noted that Heathrow was already included in the CAA's Aviation Noise Attitudes Survey (ANAS). JM responded that Heathrow would view its own survey as supplementary to that study. SC welcomed the survey, noting that he had no confidence in the 2014 Survey of Noise Attitudes (SoNA). He called for more metrics to be used.
- 3.7 PW noted that the certified noise footprints of individual aircraft were falling dramatically and asked why the width of the 57 dBA arrivals' contour had not changed accordingly over twenty years. He suggested this was because aircraft were getting larger and heavier for Heathrow's fleet as a whole and asked how fleet take-off weight had changed over the last twenty years. **ACTION JM**
- 3.8 PW asked how the NAP would deal with growth. JM explained that the NAP only included actions related to how the airport operated today and that any review of growth would be subject to separate scrutiny. PW asked who would decide which airports get growth. JS replied that this was not a question for this forum.
- 3.9 AT suggested that Easterly Alternation should not be categorised as a quieter procedure because some people would be newly impacted by aircraft noise.
- 3.10 Christian Hughes (CH) was concerned that Heathrow's consultation on Easterly Alternation Infrastructure had only referred to percentages of aircraft taking off from the southern runway (09R) rather than actual numbers, noting that the annual number would increase from 400 to 35,000 under the proposed plans. He added that Longford residents could feel aircraft before they heard them due to vibration, advising he had met with the noise team earlier in the year and proposed noise and vibration monitoring in four locations in Longford. JM thanked him for his feedback and was happy to look into it. **ACTION JM**
- 3.11 JM sought members' views on building consensus, keeping members informed, prioritising actions, identifying key points of engagement and discussing specific areas in NACF task groups. MH welcomed the idea of building consensus but noted the challenge would be how to use it. AL proposed keeping the forum informed with regular updates. MH added that the forum was only a sub-group of the wider community so it would be good to spread wider. DP suggested representatives from councils and community groups could speak at council meetings. Megan Kidd (MK) asked for an overview of the groups Heathrow engaged with and their roles. **ACTION RW**
- 3.12 CH said he had been asked by residents how they could join, watch or record meetings. AL advised that the forum was not recorded because the aim was to provide a safe space for conversations, but he would take the question away. **ACTION AL**

- 3.13 Paul Beckford (PB) asked what confidence members could have on achieving targets. JM noted that dashboards worked well for quantifiable metrics, but a method was needed to feedback on other targets. DP suggested that reporting on issues that Heathrow was struggling with would help to build trust.
- 3.14 MH felt the data could be very complex and suggested the traffic light system used in FQG would help, providing a simple interface with the ability to go deeper. MT added (via the chat) that the information needed to be 'relatable' to the reader, so for example the summary dashboard data should be capable of being drilled into for data on the flight approach they live under.
- 3.15 CT noted that Harmondsworth and Sipson were some of the closest communities to the northern runway but that information about Heathrow's Quieter Neighbourhood Support scheme was not getting through because residents were recycling the postcards without reading them.
- 3.16 Margaret Majumdar (MM) suggested prioritising actions where the airport was in a position to influence airline procedures, such as landing gear deployment and Noise Abatement Departure Procedures (NADP), suggesting that NADP 2 used less fuel and was more beneficial for airlines, but NADP 1 was more beneficial for some communities.
- 3.17 Robert Buick (RB) asked if there was a report on the previous NAP. PS confirmed that the NAP had been audited and the report was included in the supporting annexes.
- 3.18 PW observed that the actions in the 2023 draft NAP were not the same as those in the final document, such as one to improve departure heights. PS confirmed that the long list of actions had been adopted and that Heathrow was actively working on the rate of climb.
- 3.19 AL proposed a separate meeting to continue the discussion. **ACTION JM**

4 Community Questions

- 4.1 Stuart Lindsey (SL) joined the meeting to answer questions about the CAA's proposal for a UK Airspace Design Service (UKADS) responsible for designing UK airspace.
- 4.2 SC asked why the US example had not been considered in the consultation material. He asked what confidence communities could have that environmental concerns would be properly considered and asked what the rush was. SL replied that the CAA had worked closely with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and learned a lot from their change of approach since 2010. He explained that the timeline for the London Terminal Manoeuvring Area (LTMA) was not changing and CAP1616 would still be the process. All other requirements such as Air Navigation Guidance (ANG) and other legislation would remain. The consultation was about changing who would do the technical work in the background in a more centralised, managed way. The CAA would still be the decision maker. SC noted that the CAA had drawn up the current process and asked what confidence communities could have that the new process would be better. He felt the timescales were driving the solution and questioned whether the CAA should be taking over airspace change proposals. SL reiterated that the process would stay the same. The consultation was about airports using a central body rather than independent consultants. This was not about making the process quicker, but about making it more likely to happen to the current planned timescales.
- 4.3 DP asked how UKADS would incorporate aspects of respite into its work and how communities could be confident of having meaningful impact at consultation. SL advised

that any material provided by airports would have to be taken in account by UKADS. He added that airports had been clear that they were best placed to have the conversations with communities. They should therefore remain resourced for engagement and bring their stakeholder feedback to UKADS. The CAA would still make the ultimate decision on whether proposals have been engaged on adequately.

- 4.4 PW noted that Heathrow, Gatwick and NATS all had different objectives. He asked how these would be reconciled, noting that criteria for Heathrow up to Stage 2 had already been agreed. SL explained this was one of the major drivers of the proposals, noting it was inevitable that different airports would have different wants and needs and would need to make trade-offs between them which could lead to airspace being designed in an uncoordinated way. The proposed body would take account of these factors, with governance being important to ensure one dominant factor did not take over. He advised the principle was to onboard all of the work done to date, noting that different airports had done things differently and one of the challenges would be comparing "apples with apples". He added that everything that had been done to date would still inform the airspace design. He noted that a line would need to be defined between airports and NATS En-route Limited (NERL) in terms of consultation. He reminded members that this was a consultation, and no decisions had yet been made.
- 4.5 PB asked if it was possible to have community representation on the governance board. SL had no position on the issue but stressed the importance of providing a rationale in the consultation response.
- 4.6 DG asked where communities would feedback on a UKADS proposal. SL advised that the touchpoints would be the same as today under CAP1616 with a consultation and a consultation response document. Engagement would still take place through Heathrow.
- 4.7 PW stated that the process would give NATS top-down responsibility and a broadbrush approach to solving problems instead of providing an option to sit down and consider hotspots in isolation. SL explained that the process was about bringing the design together holistically in a similar way to outside the UK.
- 4.8 DP suggested that the issue of funding was quite contentious and asked when the consultation on this would come out. SL advised that it came out last week and was on the CAA website. He added that the proposal was for funding to come from the airlines. DP asked if the CAA would provide written responses to questions submitted before the meeting. **ACTION SL**
- 4.9 MT asked if UKADS would help to better prepare for Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) and other traffic coming into lower airspace in the future. SL advised that this was not part of the current consultation but would be considered in the future, noting that funding would be more complicated as it could not just be funded by airlines.
- 4.10 SL urged members to respond to the consultation with their views, noting there would be aspects that would not please everyone, but that it was important to ensure the expertise was there to design airspace holistically.

5 Heathrow Airspace Update

- 5.1 JS provided an update on Airspace Modernisation, noting that the team had been looking at compiling system options based on the 141 options shortlisted at the end of Stage 2. This involved assembling a combination of the shortlisted arrival and departure options for easterly and westerly operations into one potential system design . She explained that there was no single right way to do this, so Heathrow was taking time to

find a way forward. The team was also looking at PBN arrivals in more detail as promised at the end of Stage 2 and looking at options for how to overlay considerations for respite and avoiding multiple overflight of the same communities. An update should be ready to share with members in 2025 Q1.

- 5.2 JS advised that a new change had been initiated on the CAA portal to amend the current published Missed Approach Procedure for arrivals to the southern runway on easterly operations (09R) to better reflect current operations. She explained that the change was covered under an APAC (applicability and policy check) procedure, that the Statement of Need was live on the CAA's Airspace Change Portal and more information would be shared as the work progresses.
- 5.3 JS gave an update on eTBS Pairwise, a concept that refines the separation between aircraft on final approach to Heathrow that was expected to be implemented at the end of the year. She noted that it was not anticipated to change the routes over the ground. The concept was previously presented to the forum in October 2021 by NERL (available to download [here](#)) as it was originally anticipated for implementation in 2022.
- 5.4 JS advised that the planning application for Easterly Alternation Infrastructure had been submitted to the London Borough of Hillingdon [here](#) and was now subject to Hillingdon consultation.
- 5.5 SC stressed the importance of a Do Minimum option for Airspace Modernisation, noting that any change from the existing situation should be justified. JS reminded SC that Heathrow had already made commitments for the inclusion of an option that represented minimal change in Stage 3.
- 5.6 ND asked if Heathrow had set a target number of options to avoid overwhelming communities at consultation. JS did not have a specific number in mind but agreed the number needed to be right.
- 5.7 DP noted that UKADS aimed to be doing this work by the end of 2025 and asked how it could be ensured that the Do Minimum option was considered. JS agreed this was a valid point and one that Heathrow would consider in its consultation response.
- 5.8 PW was concerned that that the Do Minimum option would not provide communities any say over the introduction of Performance Based Navigation (PBN) or Easterly Alternation. JS responded that PBN was a core part of Airspace Modernisation, so a Do Minimum option would include PBN in some form. SC added that the issue would be how PBN was used, and that managed dispersal should be considered.

6 AOB

- 6.1 AL reminded members they were invited to CISHA Festive Drinks on 10th December (6:30-8:30pm) which would provide them an opportunity to meet the new CISHA Chair, Tracey Waltho. He asked those interested to register on the [CISHA website](#) before 2nd December.
- 6.2 AT asked for an update on the forum mapping interviews carried out by Savanta as part of CISHA's forum engagement review. AL advised that the report was being finalised and CISHA intended to discuss it at the next forum.

Date of Next Meeting

Wed 5 Feb (13:00-16:00) - Leonardo Hotel, Bath Road, Sipson, UB7 0DP.