

Noise and Airspace Community Forum (NACF)

Summary Minutes (20 Mar 2024, 13:00-16:00, Radisson Blu Heathrow)

Confirmed attendees

Name	Borough / Organisation
Andreas Lambrianou	Chair
Cllr Guy Gillbe*	Bracknell Forest Council
Paul Quinn	British Airways
Cllr Dr Wendy Matthews	Buckinghamshire Council
John Burton *	CAA
Ben Lippitt *	CAA
Mark Izatt	CISHA
Laura Keith	CISHA
Ian Greene *	DfT
Gary Marshall	DfT
Tim May	DfT
Hafsah Abid *	DfT
Margaret Majumdar	Ealing Aircraft Noise Action Group
Nigel Davies	Englefield Green Action Group
Robert Buick	Englefield Green Action Group
Paul Conway	Englefield Green Action Group
Nick Woolley	Frontier Economics
Matt Parry	Frontier Economics
Paul Beckford	HACAN
Christine Taylor	Harmondsworth and Sipson Residents Association
Armelle Thomas	Harmondsworth and Sipson Residents Association
Samantha Fountain *	Heathrow
Natalie Wallis	Heathrow
Rick Norman *	Heathrow
Jennifer Sykes	Heathrow
Richard West	Heathrow
Pierre Sohier	Heathrow
Michael Thornton *	Heathrow Strategic Planning Group
Cllr John Martin	London Borough of Ealing
Surinderpal Suri *	London Borough of Ealing
Deborah Petty	Molesey Residents Association
Robin Clarke *	NATS
David Matthews *	NATS
Ian Jopson *	NATS
Bridget Bell	Plane Hell Action
Graham Young	Richings Park Residents Association
Neil Maybin *	Richmond Heathrow Campaign
Peter Willan	Richmond Heathrow Campaign
Dave Gilbert	Teddington Action Group
Stephen Clark	Teddington Action Group
Richard Harbord	Windlesham Society
Cllr Mark Howard	Windsor & Maidenhead

* *Attended online*

Apologies

David Hilton
Spencer Norton
Darren Rhodes
Cllr Sean Beatty

Ascot Parish Council
British Airways
CAA
Spelthorne Borough Council

1 Welcome and Introduction

- 1.1 Andreas Lambrianou (AL) welcomed members to the forum.
- 1.2 AL noted that the summary minutes from the previous meeting had been finalised and all actions completed as detailed below.
- 1.3 **Provide access to old noise complaints reports (1.4)**
- 1.4 **Circulate late running flight data to all members (1.7)**
- 1.5 **Circulate CAA's ANAS slides (3.3)**
- 1.6 **Forward community comments to Verita and HAQWG (4.7 & 5.6)**

2 Health Impacts of Aviation Noise

- 2.1 Nick Woolley (NW) from Frontier Economics gave an update on a scoping study commissioned by the forum chair to assess the case for considering a wider set of harms from aviation noise. He advised that they had reviewed a range of evidence on various health effects and were now interested in hearing the views of forum members on their initial findings and whether they should be considering additional harms and sources.
- 2.2 Members asked a number of questions about the scope of the study, the extent of the research, whether the team had any medical expertise, the effects of long-term exposure and how far back evidence would be considered. NW advised that the scope was to look at the health harms associated with noise, not non-acoustic factors, population data or annoyance per se. So far, the review had only looked at English language evidence, but they would consider broadening this if there were specific studies members thought should be included. He explained that the job was to interpret the data as researchers, not to assess the clinical quality of the studies. The study was evidence-based and would consider long-term impacts. All evidence would be considered but they were most interested in the latest evidence.
- 2.3 AL asked members to submit any comments or suggestions to him or NW.

3 Data Dashboard

- 3.1 Samantha Fountain (SF) presented the Operational KPI Dashboard for February 2024. She noted that Continuous Descent Approach (CDA) performance had dropped slightly in January following a change in how the metric was monitored, but this was now improving following engagement with airlines.
- 3.2 SF explained that Continuous Climb Operations (CCO) performance was low due to airspace constraints which would be addressed by Airspace Modernisation. Paul

Beckford (PB) asked why performance had dropped since last year. SF explained that the constraints had not changed but traffic numbers had increased. Ian Jopson (IJ) added that air traffic controllers always provided a continuous climb if it was available, but some departure routes were constrained because they passed under airborne holds.

- 3.3 SF advised that on average there were 16 early morning arrivals (04:30-06:00) per day in February. She noted that 4% climb gradient compliance was 99.94% with only 11 violations in over 18,000 departures. She added that there had been 9 late runners in February and that the number of nights without late runners in 2023 had been changed from 145 to 144 following an internal audit. She announced that Heathrow would soon be relaunching its renamed Fly Quieter and Greener programme which encourages airlines to use quieter and cleaner aircraft and fly them in the quietest way.
- 3.4 Wendy Matthews (WM) asked what the criteria was for non-dispensed flights. SF explained that they were flights that did not meet the DfT dispensation criteria.

4 Heathrow Updates

- 4.1 **Quieter Neighbourhood Support.** Rick Norman (RN) gave an update on Heathrow's noise insulation scheme. He advised that contracts should soon be in place with tier 1 suppliers to manage the scheme rollout. In the last month the first pilot zone was launched and 100 properties in Longford were invited to participate. Around 30% of those have been scheduled for surveys so far. The scheme will be rolled out in zones to drive take-up. Heathrow's former Quieter Homes Scheme achieved 78% take-up and the target for the new scheme was 80%.
- 4.2 Surinderpal Suri (SS) asked how long it would take to complete every property in the scheme boundary. RN advised that 25,000 properties were currently eligible so it would take more than five years. He added that it may be possible to accelerate the process once the delivery model was in place, but it was important to proceed in the right way. SS asked if the boundary would be affected by Airspace Modernisation. RN confirmed that it was a dynamic boundary, so it was designed to take account of future noise level changes.
- 4.3 **Noise Action Plan (NAP).** Pierre Sohier (PS) advised that Heathrow was currently waiting for the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to approve Heathrow's NAP for the period 2024 to 2028. He provided an overview of the advertising and feedback received for the NAP consultation. He also presented the key NAP projects and topics that Heathrow intends to work on with the NACF during the plan's implementation.
- 4.4 Bridget Bell (BB) pointed out that some areas of London did not experience much benefit from respite. RN recognised there was less respite further out. He advised that Heathrow had previously conducted an early morning arrival trial to alternate further out but it had received mixed community reviews. He noted that Heathrow would look at how that concept could be improved as part of the NAP.
- 4.5 Armelle Thomas (AT) asked about feedback received on Land Use Planning. PS explained that Local Authorities did not generally consider their responsibility under the ICAO Balanced Approach.
- 4.6 SS asked how much noise reduction had occurred over the last five years due to the introduction of quieter aircraft. RN explained that a range of contours were published [online](#) and encouraged members to use them. He noted that the reduction in noise levels was mostly driven by fleet change. He added there had been a lot of variation over the

last five years because 2020-22 was affected by low flight numbers during Covid, so the trend shows better over the longer term.

- 4.7 **Airspace Modernisation.** Natalie Wallis (NW) gave an update on Heathrow's airspace change proposal for Airspace Modernisation and the CAA's decision that Heathrow had not passed the CAP1616 Stage 2 Gateway. She understood the forum's frustration at the lack of communication but explained that the airspace team had been to every forum to provide what little information they had. She advised that Heathrow now had the information it required to work towards a resubmission. This would involve more engagement, with online sessions in mid-April and an email option, working towards a Stage 2 resubmission in May for a June gateway.
- 4.8 Paul Beckford (PB) asked why Heathrow had not passed the Stage 2 Gateway and what the delay would mean for the implementation of Airspace Modernisation. NW advised that the minutes of the meeting with the CAA had been published on the airspace change portal and details of the issue would be covered in the engagement. She noted that there were also delays from other airports and Heathrow would be in touch with the Airspace Change Organising Group (ACOG).
- 4.9 Mark Izzat (MI) advised that AL would be chairing a session on Airspace Modernisation and night flights at the CISHA Open Forum on 18 April which would be attended by Heathrow CEO Thomas Woldbye. He encouraged members to submit questions.

5 Community Slot: Airspace Modernisation and Engagement

- 5.1 Stephen Clark (SC) gave a presentation on Airspace Modernisation and stakeholder engagement. He believed there was a lack of transparency in the engagement between the CAA, Heathrow and community stakeholders, as well as shortcomings in the evidence base and evaluation framework established by the DfT and CAA. He asked the CAA to respond to issues raised in a letter on 6 September 2023. He asked Heathrow to detail how far back in the Airspace Modernisation process they would have to go, to share the new timescales and to include do minimum options in the process. He also felt the time given to respond to the further engagement of airspace modernisation was too short and requested longer.
- 5.2 Deborah Petty (DP) feared that Heathrow had already decided where the routes would go. Jennifer Sykes (JS) assured her that this was not the case, and that Heathrow was committed to being open and transparent and bringing stakeholders in at the right stage.
- 5.3 NW explained that the timescales for the upcoming engagement would be appropriate for the level of engagement required. She acknowledged that a do minimum option was important to communities and would be looked at in Stage 3.
- 5.4 Ben Lippitt (BL) confirmed he would take away the question for the CAA. **ACTION BL**

6 Night Flight Regime Consultation

- 6.1 Gary Marshall (GM) gave a presentation on the DfT consultation on night flight restrictions at Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted from October 2025. The consultation is open until 22 May and can be found [here](#). The presentation was circulated to members prior to the meeting.
- 6.2 MI advised that CISHA would be submitting a response to the consultation. AL added that he would also be submitting a summary of the forum view.

- 6.3 GM advised that a night-time noise abatement objective had been confirmed for the next night flight regime “to limit and where possible reduce, the adverse effects of aviation noise at night on health and quality of life, while supporting sustainable growth and recognising the importance to the UK of commercial passenger and freight services.” PB noted that the Leq metric was being used to measure against this objective and asked why N60 was not being used. Tim May (TM) explained that if research showed that N60 was better than Leq then it would be considered in future, but the current evidence showed better correlation using Leq. SC argued that this was debatable.
- 6.4 DP asked about progress of the Aviation Night Noise Effects (ANNE) study and the Aviation Noise Attitudes Survey (ANAS). TM advised that ANNE was sponsored by DfT and was being conducted by a consortium led by St George's University of London. He explained that the first stage was a subjective study involving people providing their opinions via a survey. This was currently being written up and he hoped the findings would be published later in the year. He added that the second stage was an objective study which would take place this summer with a smaller sample of people using sleep monitors to see if people were responding to noise events at night. TM added that ANAS was being managed by the CAA. It would be similar to the previous Survey of Noise Attitudes (SoNA) and would be purely an attitudes survey about daytime noise.
- 6.5 DP asked about the sample sizes of the studies. PB responded (via chat) that the ANNE study had 4,000 people in part 1 and 170 people in part 2. John Burton (JB) added that ANAS involved 30,000 people across 10 UK airports.
- 6.6 SC expressed a lack of trust and suggested that CAA should not be involved in ANAS. TM explained that CAA was managing the contract, but the work was being carried out by Ipsos and the research would be independently peer reviewed. Armelle Thomas (AT) added that having previously worked at MORI the results would depend on how the questions were phrased.
- 6.7 DG noted that he had asked to see the results of the ANNE pilot study through a Freedom of Information request but was refused. He added that it should have been conducted closer to the summer instead of October/November and noted that it included an 11-point numeric scale. TM explained that there was no perfect time to sample but the survey asked questions about the summer, so it had to take place after summer was over. He advised that a 5-point verbal scale could also be used, and peer reviews would pick up the best option. IG added that the ISO standard recommended the use of both scales, so the 11-point scale had been included to meet the standard.
- 6.8 Margaret Majumdar (MM) asked if DfT had assumed that early morning arrivals between 04:30 and 06:00 were inevitable for the forthcoming regime, adding that communities would never accept Heathrow waking people so early in the morning. TM explained that the regime does not specify what time night flights should operate, noting that they could be any time from 23:30 to 06:00 but that Heathrow had a voluntary agreement in place to prevent flights landing before 04:30. He added that the regime aimed to balance the effects of night noise with the economic benefits, noting that Heathrow's early morning arrivals were economically valuable and had historic slots that would be difficult to change. MM felt that the economic benefits of night flights were debatable and the cost to the community should be considered. MI responded that as the chair of the Heathrow Passenger Forum (HPF) he understood that early morning arrivals were strategically important for filling short haul flights into Europe.
- 6.9 PS recommended that members should read Heathrow's response to the DfT Night Flight Consultation from September 2021 (available [here](#)) which provides an explanation

of the rationale for night flights.

- 6.10 SS suggested that the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) should be involved in the ANNE study and that the sample size should be larger. TM confirmed that Ben Fenech from UKHSA was involved in an advisory role but noted that the second stage of the study involved expensive equipment, so a larger sample size was not possible for budgetary reasons.
- 6.11 AT suggested that Heathrow was not operating at full capacity, that airlines had operated ghost flights during Covid and were still doing so.
- 6.12 PW gave a presentation highlighting a number of recommendations he had previously presented to the forum in November 2023. He claimed there was no good reason for night flights and the only reason for them was that the DfT allowed them.
- 6.13 WM suggested there was no economic argument for early morning arrivals at the weekend. MI disagreed, noting that many business people and entrepreneurs worked seven days a week. Christine Taylor (CT) stated that human beings needed to sleep. People can change meeting times, but children cannot get their lives back and we should not put historic slot rights above everything else.
- 6.14 RN noted that the presentation contained much that Heathrow did not agree with and reiterated that Heathrow's position was set out in its response to the DfT Night Flight Consultation.

7 AOB

- 7.1 AT mentioned that she had seen an article in the CISHA bulletin about electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) aircraft and asked if they would be introduced at Heathrow. TM understood the article was about the process and not about Heathrow specifically.

8 Date of next Meeting

Wed 29 May 2024 (13:00-16:00) – London Heathrow Marriott Hotel, Hayes, UB3 5AN.