

## Noise and Airspace Community Forum (NACF)

Minutes (29 March 2023, 13:00 – 16:00, London Heathrow Marriott)

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### Confirmed attendees

Name	Borough / Organisation
Andreas Lambrianou	Chair
Spencer Norton	British Airways
Cllr Dr Wendy Matthews	Buckinghamshire Council
John Burton	CAA
Abigail Grenfell	CAA
Darren Rhodes *	CAA
Liz Sugg *	CISHA
Tim May	DfT
Rebecca Christie *	DfT
Margaret Majumdar	Ealing Aircraft Noise Action Group
Cllr Tony Popham	Elmbridge Borough Council
Robert Buick	Englefield Green Action Group
Nigel Davies	Englefield Green Action Group
Armelle Thomas	Harmondsworth and Sipson Residents Association
Becky Coffin	Heathrow
Rick Norman	Heathrow
Michael Glen *	Heathrow
Richard West	Heathrow
Pierre Sohier	Heathrow
Sarah Jane Pickthorne	Heathrow
Michael Thornton *	Heathrow Strategic Planning Group
Colin Stanbury	Local Authorities Aircraft Noise Council
Cllr John Martin	London Borough of Ealing
Surinderpal Suri *	London Borough of Ealing
Paul Baker *	London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham
Deborah Petty	Molesey Residents Association
Dave Matthews	NATS
Bridget Bell	Plane Hell Action
Graham Young	Richings Park Residents Association
Michael McCrory *	Richmond Heathrow Campaign
Peter Willan *	Richmond Heathrow Campaign
Cllr David Hilton *	Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead
Sue Janota *	Surrey County Council
Stephen Clark	Teddington Action Group
Dave Gilbert	Teddington Action Group
Carole Marr	Windlesham Society
Dr John Lees	Iver Village Residents Association
John Doherty *	Forest Hill Society
Tim Walker *	Forest Hill Society

\* *Attended online*

## Apologies

Ian Greene	DfT
Ian Jopson	NATS
Robin Clarke	NATS
Paul Beckford	HACAN

## 1 Welcome and Introduction

- 1.1 Andreas Lambrianou (AL) welcomed members to the forum. He noted that there had been many meetings since the last forum on 8 February, including a Noise Action Plan (NAP) session on Noise Insulation Schemes and two Airspace Modernisation sessions.

## 2 Previous Minutes and Actions

- 2.1 AL advised that the draft meeting notes from the previous forum had been circulated and comments had been received from members. Surinderpal Suri (SS) and Dave Gilbert (DG) had asked questions which would be covered outside the meeting, and Bridget Bell (BB) had asked about the Kiln Green noise monitor which will be covered later by Mike Glen (MG). BB also asked for the minutes to be amended to include her comment about arrivals in SE London. AL confirmed that this would be incorporated.
- 2.2 AL went through the actions from the previous meeting as detailed below.
- 2.3 **Provide a map showing heights above sea level (2.3).** A printed map was provided.
- 2.4 **Provide the latest figures for retrofitted A320 aircraft (2.4).** Pierre Sohier (PS) will provide an update later in the meeting.
- 2.5 **Rick Norman (RN) to meet SS (2.11).** RN confirmed that he would follow up with SS outside the meeting. **ACTION RN**
- 2.6 **Provide an outline of Heathrow's updated Noise Insulation Schemes (2.12).** This is on today's agenda.
- 2.7 **Consider including noise level data on the data dashboard (2.14).** Armelle Thomas (AT) advised that she had subsequently spoken to RN about this.
- 2.8 **RN to follow up with Darren Rhodes about the Noise Abatement Departure Profile (NADP) study (3.2).** RN hoped the next meeting would be take place on 12 or 13 April.
- 2.9 **AL to review the noise complaints system (5.7).** AL advised that he had taken a preliminary look at the complaints system. He felt that it was robust but would look for areas where it could be improved. Robert Buick (RB) felt that some of the responses were perfunctory. AL committed to investigating further. **ACTION AL**
- 2.10 **Consider adding noise complaint and NAP data to the dashboard and publishing it online (6.3).** MG will provide an update later.
- 2.11 **Respond to written questions from Deborah Petty (DP) about noise monitors (7.2).** A response was sent out yesterday.

- 2.12 **RB to provide link to noise monitor service (7.4).** RB confirmed that this was done.
- 2.13 **Clarify why the Kiln Green monitor was described as a mirror for London (7.5).** MG will provide an update later.
- 2.14 **Provide an update on the proposal to measure Continuous Descent Approaches (CDA) from 7,000ft (9.1).** MG will provide an update later.
- 2.15 **Consider holding future meetings at the Heathrow Academy or Compass Centre (9.3).** Richard West (RW) advised that there were no longer any suitable rooms at the Compass Centre and that the Academy was only available on Thursdays. Members voted for the next meeting to be held at the London Heathrow Marriott with the possibility of moving to Thursdays for future meetings.

### 3 Deep Dive: Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 RN opened a discussion about the roles and responsibilities of Government and industry bodies in policy development and noise management. The presentation was circulated prior to the meeting. Tim May (TM) gave an overview of the legislative framework related to noise at Heathrow and RN discussed the accountability and responsibilities of various bodies in the form of a RACI chart.
- 3.2 TM described how each body coordinated to provide research and evidence relevant to aviation noise and health. He explained that the Interdepartmental Group on Costs and Benefits Noise Subject Group (IGCB(N)) was a Defra-led body that looked at the findings from research, e.g. World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Survey of Noise Attitudes (SoNA), and made recommendations to Government which, if accepted, flowed into the treasury green book which in turn fed into Transport Analysis Guidance (TAG).
- 3.3 RN discussed developing areas of common interest, noting that DfT had made significant improvements to TAG over recent years, addressing wider impacts and closing gaps that existed on residual value and environmental impacts. However, he noted that a model was only as good as the data that was fed into it. TM added that while TAG was an important tool that influenced Government and airspace decisions, it was not the only consideration for ministers and does not have all the answers.
- 3.4 Peter Willan (PW) asked if TAG was appropriate for aircraft noise, noting that it was originally designed for road and rail, so optimisation was based on total noise and would lead to the concentration of flight paths. RN echoed TM's comments that TAG was not the only consideration for ministers and noted that a proposal to add supplementary metrics could provide an area of common ground.
- 3.5 AT proposed that Defra or the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) should sit on the forum. **ACTION AL**
- 3.6 AT asked how EU rules affected the aviation industry following the UK's withdrawal from the EU. TM explained that there was currently a large body of EU law incorporated directly into UK law, and the Government faced a huge job to decide which laws should be retained and which should expire.
- 3.7 Michael Thornton (MT) asked whether the forum's remit also considered carbon. AL explained that the forum was focussed on noise but recognised that there were other factors when considering policy. He advised that there were other forums which sat under the Council for the Independent Scrutiny of Heathrow Airport (CISHA) which looked at areas such as air quality.

- 3.8 Michael McCrory (MMc) was pleased that TAG had been adopted but cautioned that one of the main problems with multi-criteria analysis was the weightings applied to different factors. He suggested that a good starting point for looking at weightings was the recent Union Connectivity Review published by the Government in 2021.
- 3.9 RB asked if community groups were represented at the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). RN confirmed that they were. RB asked about the benefits of night flights and RN explained that there had been multiple studies but acknowledged that there would be disagreement in this forum. He added that Heathrow typically made its responses to the Government's night flight consultation public.
- 3.10 SC suggested that the impact of change, concentration, respite and modal change should also be considered.
- 3.11 SS asked about the 'polluter pays' principle. TM advised that noise policy does not specifically recognise this principle, but it expects airports to have noise insulation schemes, adding that many also have community compensation funds.
- 3.12 DG claimed that the TAG model did not take account of change and asked who was responsible for setting the Lowest Observed Adverse Effect Level (LOAEL). TM explained that the concept of LOAEL was set by Defra but the level for aviation was set by the DfT in its 2017 airspace policy document at 51dB. AL asked how members could influence this level. TM advised that he was aware of members' views. He explained that the rationale for the 51dB threshold was set out in the policy document. He added that the DfT would be open to changing the level if there was new evidence to suggest it should be lower, but he noted that it was hard to measure accurately below 51dB.
- 3.13 AT noted that domestic passenger duty would be halving in April. PW added that Heathrow and its passengers were wholly underpaying and that international transfer passengers should not be exempt from duty.

## 4 Community Updates

- 4.1 RB complained that the new meeting format meant that community groups no longer had 50% of the meeting for their presentations.
- 4.2 Carole Marr (CM) advised that she had submitted a question on curved approaches which she expected to be followed up with Heathrow's airspace team. **ACTION AL**
- 4.3 DG gave a presentation entitled 'Understanding the basis for Government Aviation Policy and Sensitivities'. He stated that Heathrow's impact was particularly sensitive to annoyance levels and proposed that the financial impacts needed to be calculated to at least 45dB LAeq instead of 51dB. He suggested that polluters should pay for the damage caused and that there was a strong case to reduce flight numbers at Heathrow. He stressed that the new Aviation Noise Attitudes Survey (ANAS) needed to be robust, avoid previous flaws and be transparent to all stakeholders. The presentation was circulated prior to the meeting.

- 4.4 TM noted that neither SoNA or the WHO guidance were perfect and hoped ANAS would provide a better solution. He explained that many of the WHO studies were older than SoNA and were sourced from culturally different areas such as Vietnam, adding that the WHO recommended using locally produced surveys.
- 4.5 AL asked how members could feed into the IGCB(N) process that would consider ANAS in its review of evidence on the costs and benefits of noise. TM responded that it would be appropriate to write to Defra. AL suggested that it might be possible to put forward a forum view once a deep dive had taken place on the topic.
- 4.6 Margaret Majumdar (MMa) mentioned that Heathrow had previously provided detailed information about every late running flight. AL advised that information about late runners was included on the data dashboard. RN added that the data was more focused on trends and that resource should go into producing the most appropriate data rather than information that almost nobody looked at.

## 5 Noise Insulation Scheme Update

- 5.1 RN presented an overview of Heathrow's updated noise insulation schemes which cover homes, schools, and other community buildings. He advised that the residential schemes had been simplified into a single offer, covering 100% of the insulation costs up to an inflation-linked maximum of £30,000. Improvements have also been made to the relocation assistance scheme and the school ventilation initiative has been extended to schools that have previously qualified for insulation support. Further details of the updated schemes are available on Heathrow's website [here](#).
- 5.2 AL opened the floor for questions. MMA asked if annual averages would be used to calculate the scheme boundaries, noting that areas such as Ealing were only overflowed 30% of the time. RB asked what noise levels the scheme boundary was based on and how many homes would be eligible. PW asked how much the scheme would cost. SS asked if the acoustic glazing offered was laminated and how Heathrow would improve scheme uptake. DP asked about the ventilation proposals in the context of Government policy to avoid mould. AT wanted to know if the updated schemes covered the same areas as before and what would happen to properties vacated as a result of the home relocation scheme.
- 5.3 RN confirmed that annual averages would be used, based on daytime levels of 63 dBA Leq and night-time levels of 55 dBA Leq and 90dB SEL, covering broadly the same areas as before and prioritising those most affected. He explained that it was hard to provide an exact figure for the total cost due to the dynamic boundary of the scheme, but it would be in the region of 20,000 properties at an average cost of £15,000 to £18,000 per property. He advised that a phased approach would be used to drive take-up, utilising a number of different methods to contact residents including knocking on doors. He noted that a conservative estimate for how long the scheme would take was 2040 and would ultimately depend on a number of variables such as take up rates, available budget, supply chain capability and changes to the noise exposure contours determining the dynamic boundary. He explained that there was a range of different products and part of the tender process was for companies to come back with innovations, noting that one of the proposed products for ventilation helped to reduce mould. Research would also be carried out to source the most effective products. He noted that the relocation assistance package was more generous than the previous scheme. He added that not everyone was highly annoyed by aircraft noise, so vacated properties would not be knocked down, but anyone moving into the area would be expected to do their due diligence and know that they were moving close to the airport.

- 5.4 Members agreed to AL's proposal that Paul Beckford (PB) should represent the NACF on the scheme's Prioritisation Panel.
- 5.5 RB asked Liz Sugg (LS) if CISHA was looking into Vienna's insulation scheme and whether she wanted to meet with NACF community members. LS confirmed that work was being done but was keen not to duplicate the meetings of other forums.

## 6 Data Dashboard

- 6.1 MG presented the latest operational data dashboard showing rolling monthly and yearly performance across a range of metrics. The presentation was circulated prior to the meeting. AL asked if the dashboard could be developed to be published online. MG advised that there was already an operational data section on the website so he would look at how that could be improved. **ACTION MG**
- 6.2 MG responded to questions raised in the previous minutes. He explained that the dashboard was based on KPIs stipulated in the UK Aeronautical Information Publication (AIP), and that noise complaint data was provided in other dedicated reports. He advised that the reason the noise monitor location in Kiln Green was described as a mirror for London was because the same type of aircraft arrive over those locations during westerly and easterly operations but noted that average noise levels would be different as westerly operations occurred 70% of the time. He advised that the proposal to measure CDA from 7,000 feet was in progress and the next step was to engage with airlines and NATS to let them know about the proposed change.
- 6.3 RB stated that there were 300 community noise monitors around Frankfurt Airport where it was possible to drill down into the data. AL responded that he would pick this up with RB and RN offline. **ACTION AL**

## 7 Noise Action Plan (NAP) Update

- 7.1 PS provided an update on the retrofit of A320 aircraft with air flow deflectors to reduce noise. He advised that the percentage of retrofitted A320 at Heathrow in March 2023 was 90.5%. The presentation was circulated prior to the meeting.

## 8 AOB

- 8.1 AL informed members that a meeting would take place next month to discuss the appointment of an independent technical advisor.
- 8.2 AT mentioned a recent engine test that took place at 2:20am and asked why Heathrow allowed them to happen. AL proposed looking into the procedures, but Wendy Matthews (WM) argued that members already knew the procedures and felt they were not being followed properly. She advised that Heathrow had already committed to investigate further. **ACTION AK**
- 8.3 SS advised that Heathrow had committed to provide guidance to local authorities on land use planning and wanted to know who should pay for new developments that would be affected by airspace modernisation. **ACTION RN**