

GACC NEWSLETTER

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Dear Members

Airport developments

Since our last newsletter the number of flights using Gatwick has, as expected, continued to increase. The airport is currently handling about 250 aircraft movements per day on average. This is expected to increase to 350-400 per day by the end of August as more airlines re-start services. By comparison, Gatwick handled some 950 movements daily in recent summers.

The airport's opening hours for scheduled flights were increased to 06.00 to 22.00 in mid June. Increasing number of flights out side these hours have been recorded (August 8th - 28 night movements noted) yet its taken until today for any formal announcement of a return to 24hr operations to be made.

We have received no response to our June letter to Gatwick's CEO asking the airport to do everything possible to minimise the impacts of its operations as it reopens. Our specific proposals included that the airport should remain closed at night in order to avoid flights that have the greatest impact, that airlines should prioritise flying the quietest aircraft in their fleets and that air traffic control operators should disperse aircraft and adopt noise-minimising arrival and departure procedures given airspace is less congested. We've asked for an urgent response and will be raising these issues with the Noise Management Board.

GATCOM update

GATCOM, the airport's statutory Consultative Committee, met on 16 July for the first time since January. A summary of that meeting is available [here](#) .

Following that meeting GATCOM's Chairman wrote to the Secretary of State for Transport about the position at Gatwick. GACC supports some aspects of the Chairman's letter, particularly GATCOM's support for a balanced approach to economic and environmental measures and its call for measures to address both climate change and the other environmental impacts of the airport's operations. However, we do not support the letter's endorsement of proposals Gatwick has made to Government, including for tax and regulatory cost reductions.

We've written to GATCOM's Chairman expressing our disappointment that his letter excluded many of our comments and our concern that it was sent in the name of GATCOM as a whole. Our letter is available [here](#)

Noise Management Board

Gatwick's new Noise Community Forum met for the first time in February. The first meeting of the NMB Executive Board, on which GACC has a seat representing community and environmental groups, was scheduled for March but postponed.

The NMB Chairs have recently announced that meetings will re-start in the autumn, with the first Executive Board meeting expected on 21 October. They are also holding "surgeries" later in August. If there are issues you'd like GACC to raise at these meetings please let us know.

Engaging with local MPs

Several MPs in the Gatwick area have recently called for Air Passenger Duty to be suspended and for the government to provide other forms of sector specific support to aviation. We fully understand that MPs in areas where jobs are at risk will want to do all they can to support their constituents. However, part of GACC's role is to ensure that MPs and other elected officials have a full understanding of aviation's community and environmental impacts. We also want to ensure that the information available to MPs on, for example, aviation's economic benefits is accurate given it is widely overstated by the industry. We are therefore continuing to engage with local MPs and will occasionally seek to advise them or provide an alternative view when we think they are not seeing the full picture. One example of this was our recent letter to the West Sussex County Times commenting on an article by Andrew Griffith MP, which is available [here](#).

GACC on Twitter

We haven't been active on Twitter for a while but are restarting so please follow us @GCgatwick. We'll be highlighting the latest news on Gatwick, communicating the work we do and supporting other aviation noise and environmental groups.

National aviation policy

GACC continues to work with a range of other groups nationally to try to ensure that community and environmental views are heard and fully considered as aviation restarts.

We recently co-signed a **letter** to the Chancellor urging the government not to invest taxpayers' money in projects that might (possibly) reduce aviation's emissions but rather to regulate the industry's emissions and other adverse environmental and health impacts properly, by setting and enforcing standards and targets.

GACC committee membership

We are sad to report that Dominic Nevill has stepped down from GACC's Committee to give him more time to pursue his business and other interests. Dominic is the chair and founder of ESCCAN, the East Sussex aviation noise group, and a long-term supporter of GACC. We are grateful for his input and advice over the years.

We are delighted, though, that Jonathan Essex has taken Dominic's place on the Committee. Jonathan is a civil engineer and a prominent environmentalist. He represents Redhill East on both Reigate and Banstead Borough Council and Surrey County Council, for the Green Party.

Joining GACC: please spread the word

Gatwick has been quiet this summer compared to recent years. But we are already beginning to see an increase in noise and emissions, and the threat of the airport's unnecessary and ill-considered expansion plans hang over all local communities and those under flight paths. Gatwick wants to grow to almost the size Heathrow is today, with devastating noise, congestion and climate change consequences.

Please encourage your friends, family and neighbours to join GACC and help protect the interests of communities all around the airport. Information on how to do so can be found [here](#).

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