

# GACC NEWSLETTER

Number 147

September 2025

As we move nearer the expected decision date for Gatwick's northern runway project (27<sup>th</sup> October) here's news on the latest position together with an update on a range of other matters.

## **Gatwick expansion**

As members will be aware, the Secretary of State announced in February this year that she was minded to approve Gatwick's expansion subject to changes to its noise and local transport proposals. She sought Gatwick's views on these changes and then consulted on them. A decision is expected in October but could come sooner.

GACC has always been clear that it will oppose expansion at Gatwick through all legal means, reflecting the environmental, community and other damage it would cause. We attended all key evidence sessions in the inquiry and submitted very extensive evidence drawing on our network of experts. We have engaged in all post-inquiry processes, submitting detailed responses to the Secretary of State's proposals and Gatwick's responses to those proposals.

Recognising the potential need for judicial review proceedings to challenge any approval of Gatwick's proposals and following legal opinion given in September 2022, we appointed lawyers to advise on that process in December 2024. Our team is Goodenough Ring Solicitors (GRS) and barristers Alex Goodman KC of Landmark Chambers and Gethin Thomas of 39 Essex Chambers. GRS are experienced environmental, planning and public law solicitors, who most recently pursued the government to the Court of Appeal in challenging the re-opening of Manston Airport. Alex Goodman KC is an exceptional public lawyer, with specialisms in environmental, planning and human rights law. He is Joint Head of Landmark Chambers' Public Law Group. Gethin Thomas specialises in environmental law and acted in the first ever successful challenge to a DCO in the Manston Airport judicial review.

We have been working closely with them throughout the year including on our detailed responses to the Secretary of State's proposals and Gatwick's responses. We and our advisers believe there are strong climate, noise and other grounds on which to challenge any approval of Gatwick expansion.

You may have seen recent newsletters and online posts from fellow campaign group CAGNE. Some of these posts have criticised other campaign groups, specifically GACC, for seeking to raise funds to pursue a judicial review should Gatwick expansion be approved.

## ***Campaigning for a better environment for the whole area around Gatwick***

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We are surprised and disappointed that CAGNE chose to criticise fellow campaigners in this public, hostile and unconstructive way, particularly given our objectives are essentially the same.

GACC believes that we are far stronger working together rather than against each other, particularly given the weight of resources that will likely be pitched against us by the government and Gatwick Airport. We will therefore continue to attempt to work positively and constructively together.

In the interests of transparency and clarity, however, we emphasize the following:

- GACC played a critical active role throughout the public inquiry, deploying internal expertise and expert assistance strategically on all key issues.
- GACC always recognised the potential need for judicial review proceedings should Gatwick's expansion be approved, which is why we appointed highly experienced legal advisers in December 2024.
- We were aware of CAGNE's intention to pursue a judicial review and of the challenges involved in mounting parallel processes, not least raising two sets of funding.
- We therefore approached CAGNE's committee earlier this year proposing that our groups should work more closely together including in relation to possible JR proceedings
- We argued that combining our technical and financial strengths would benefit all our members and those we represent. This was not positively received and CAGNE has subsequently rejected our offers to collaborate on judicial review matters.

Nevertheless, we remain ready to engage constructively, and our legal teams will inevitably need to coordinate, if more than one legal challenge is brought.

### **Heathrow proposals**

Most readers will have heard that Heathrow have now published plans for an additional runway (but not yet submitted any planning application). At the same time a second group has published an alternative plan which offers a shorter (but they say still feasible) runway at a lower cost.

In addition to the obvious environmental impact of expansion at Heathrow on local communities and the climate, the cost is mind blowing. Heathrow's full-scale project is estimated at £49bn. Even the shorter version, known as Heathrow West, still comes in at just under £25bn including terminal facilities.

Since the previous government endorsed expansion at Heathrow and such endorsement has been repeated by today's government, one of these schemes might get policy support through a revised Airports National Policy Statement (ANPS) and ultimately planning approval.

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If so, where do Gatwick and other airport expansion proposals stand? The current ANPS and Making Best Use (MBU) policy is based on outdated evidence gathered by the Airports Commission between 2012 and 2015. These policies were approved in 2018 and therefore predate the commitment to net zero, the inclusion of international aviation in the carbon budgets and the Covid-19 pandemic. In a climate-constrained world where business travel has reduced and video-conferencing increased, airport expansion should be reconsidered nationally before long-lasting decisions are made on airport expansion. Is Gatwick's bucket and spade industry (which exports far more money than it brings in) a sensible policy option?

### **Airspace, FED developments, Route 4**

It was previously expected that proposals to change airspace to the south of Gatwick, known as London Airspace South and including most arrivals and some departures, would be taken forward by the airport, with a consultation on its preferred options in 2026. It now seems more likely - but is not yet certain - that these changes will instead be wrapped up in a wider London airspace process to be led by a new organisation known as the UK Airspace Design Service. We will continue to monitor this. In addition, we continue to press Gatwick and the CAA to respond to the report on fair and equitable distribution (FED) of aircraft noise published earlier this year.

In our last Newsletter we mentioned the petition to Parliament calling for No Airport Expansion. The petition closes on September 25<sup>th</sup> so if you haven't signed it please do so and remember to get friends and family to sign as well!

Please follow the link [here](#). You should also see this [video](#) which tells us why we should sign and send to friends and family!

### **Gatwick Annual Community Noise Meeting**

The annual meeting for communities to be updated on noise and airspace issues is planned this year for 1<sup>st</sup> October at 3pm. Gatwick have gratuitously named the event the London Gatwick Airspace Fayre 2025 failing to recognise the impact noise events can have on people. We've pointed out our disappointment at their choice of name and how it reflects on their credibility when claiming to improve the noise environment.

To register for the Airspace Fayre email [GatwickNMB.uk@egis-group.com](mailto:GatwickNMB.uk@egis-group.com)

### **Recent Activities**

An International Day for Night Flight Bans was established last year on 13<sup>th</sup> September. The event has gained traction and was repeated this year. GACC joined in and our press release can be seen [here](#). The event was co-ordinated by the Stay Grounded group and the ground swell of support (more than 220 neighbourhood associations, climate justice groups and NGOs.) can be seen [here](#).

### **Fundraiser for Legal Challenges**

To meet the legal challenges GACC has launched a Crowd Justice fundraising campaign to support these legal challenges.

Please donate to the campaign to help us continue to challenge the expansion of Gatwick Airport and the disastrous consequences that expansion would have on local people as well as globally.

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With your support we can ensure that issues like night flights, noise, air quality, and climate change do not go unnoticed. Commitments and promises dropped will not go unchallenged and we will keep on working to stop Gatwick's unsustainable expansion from becoming a terrible reality.

The link to the campaign is here: <https://www.crowdjustice.com/case/gacc/>

Alternatively donations can be made directly to our bank at :  
Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign  
Nat West Bank plc  
Sort Code 60 – 11 – 41  
A/c number 52474119

### **Join GACC**

Support GACC by becoming a member. Send us a subscription or a one-off donation - we would welcome your help. As a member you will be able to attend our AGM and vote for who should serve on our committee or even become a committee member.

More information on joining is [here](#).

If you no longer wish to receive this GACC newsletter please email [info@gacc.org.uk](mailto:info@gacc.org.uk) asking for your address to be removed. Thank you.

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