

The cost of a new Gatwick runway £50 extra per return flight

A research study published today by the Aviation Environment Federation examines who would pay for a new runway at Gatwick or at Heathrow.¹ It concludes that a new runway at Gatwick would mean an increase in airport charges (landing fees, aircraft parking charges etc) per passenger from £8 at present to £33.60 – an increase of £25, or £50 per return flight.²

At Heathrow the increase would be from £19 per passenger to £31. The calculations are based on the estimate made by the Airports Commission that a new Gatwick runway would cost £10 - £13 billion.³

The study is written by former Treasury adviser Brendon Sewill, who is chairman of the Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign, with help from Brian Ross, economic adviser to SSE, the Stansted environmental group.

Brendon Sewill said: 'Gatwick Airport often claim that a new runway at Gatwick would be cheaper than one at Heathrow. But what they do not mention is that the cost would need to be borne by roughly half as many passengers.'

In the past the cost of new infrastructure was met by the Government, or spread among the passengers at all the main UK airports. But now all the airports are privately owned by separate companies. Politicians will not want to pay for a new runway out of public funds, and indeed any subsidy would be contrary to EU rules. That means that the cost of a new runway at Gatwick would have to be met only by the passengers using Gatwick.

'£50 extra on a return flight,' Sewill added, 'might well cause passengers and airlines to choose to use Stansted instead.'

¹ AEF is the national organisation concerned with the environmental impact of aviation.
<http://www.aef.org.uk/>

² 'Who would pay for a new runway.' Copy attached. www.gacc.org.uk/latest-news

³ Airports Commission Interim report . December 2013. Paragraph 6.75

GACC is the main environmental body concerned with Gatwick. Founded in 1968, we have as members nearly 100 Borough, District and Parish Councils and environmental groups covering about a twenty miles radius from the airport. Our committee, elected annually, represents all areas. Because we rely on rational argument and put forward constructive solutions we have had strong support in Parliament and at every level of government.