

# NEWSLETTER

**Number 101 July 2014**

Campaign Office  
Stan Hill, Charlwood,  
Surrey. RH6 0EP  
01293 863 369  
gacc@btconnect.com  
www.gacc.org.uk

This is a short newsletter, mainly for the benefit of GACC members who are not on email. Those of you who are on email will have seen some of this material before, because email enables us to send messages out immediately without cost. Please give us an email address - If you don't do email yourself perhaps you have a relative or friend who could pass messages from GACC on to you?

## **New flight paths**

Gatwick Airport Ltd (GAL) have put forward plans for new flight paths which could affect many towns and villages from Petworth to Tonbridge. GACC has warned that any change in flight paths causes great distress and anger because the previous peace is shattered, houses are devalued, and people are unable to move and feel imprisoned.

One of the main motivations is GAL's desire to get more aircraft off the runway, but there is no need for extra flights when Stansted is only half full.

The consultation covers too small an area because disturbance is experienced over a much wider region, especially where background noise is low, for example in the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which surround Gatwick. It is a disgrace that no maps are given showing the full length of the new flight paths; and that no details are given of the new point-merge system for arriving aircraft which will affect much of East and West Sussex, and part of Kent.

Already flight paths have been narrowed as a result of more accurate navigational equipment and this is causing much annoyance. The trial of a new flight path over Warnham is continuing to cause fury. It is a grim warning of what would happen to perhaps 30 other towns and villages if we got a new runway with - inevitably - a whole set of new flight paths.

GACC has received many complaints that the consultation document is difficult to understand. We have asked Gatwick to produce a simpler version and have advised town and parish councils to hold public meetings so that people can understand what is proposed.

## **The Runway Situation**

A consultation by Gatwick on three options for a new runway was held in April - May. GACC described it as 'phoney' because both the Airports Commission and GAL had already decided on their preferred plan - the biggest and most damaging option. We were proved correct when Gatwick submitted their detailed plans to the Commission on 13 May, concentrating almost entirely on that option. By submitting them before the end of the consultation they showed contempt for the views of the public. Their submission was 3,200 pages long. It has not been published but they are due to produce a summary soon.

The GAL press release indicated that they are now aiming for an airport capable of handling 95 million passengers a year, bigger than Heathrow at present and nearly three times the present number using Gatwick. They have increased the number of jobs related to the airport from 17,500 to 22,000, and have increased the forecast of jobs in new firms attracted to the area to 100,000. Although this applies to London and the South East, most would be in the Gatwick area. These figures make the previous prediction of 40,000 new houses look like a serious under-estimate!

The consultation, and the 17 exhibitions held in local towns and villages, proved a great bonus for GACC. We 'picketed' all the exhibitions and were able to recruit many new members. Most people were appalled at the prospect of an airport bigger than Heathrow which would change the character of much of Surrey, Sussex and west Kent.

The Commission is drawing up its appraisal of the two Heathrow runway schemes and the Gatwick scheme to show how each score on various criteria. In the autumn they will be holding their own public consultation. GACC will concentrate on ensuring a high level of response - and will need your help.

## **Gatwick Obviously Rubbish**

Everyone will be aware of the massive advertising campaign by Gatwick. How can Gatwick afford it? Because, like Starbucks and other foreign owned companies, they pay virtually no UK tax.

But it could be counter-productive: the Airports Commission will not be pleased to have their methodical and rational examination of the issues treated like an advertisement for hair shampoo.

One example of the Gatwick rubbish is the claim that 'Today you can travel direct to 129 rail stations direct from Gatwick'. Indeed you can travel direct to such important cities such as Ifield, Littlehaven, Christs Hospital, Amberley, Arundel, Ford, Barnham and Fratton. Or to internationally vital destinations such as Polegate, Eastbourne, Hampden Park, Pevensey, Cooden Beach, Collington, Bexhill, St Leonards, and Hastings. To make up the total of 129 you can add in Horley, Salfords, Earlswood, ... Harpenden, Leagrave, Flitwick and so on.

Equal rubbish is the claim that 'Gatwick serves more destinations than any other UK airport, flying to 199 destinations compared with 167 destinations from Heathrow.' And what are the 199 destinations? Mostly occasional services to remote Greek islands or other exotic tourist hideaways. **But no services to any major US city.**

## Who is going to pay?

A research study, *Who would pay for a new runway*, by GACC chairman Brendon Sewill, has been published by the nationally respected Aviation Environment Federation. In the past, Sewill points out, all the main airports were owned by BAA, and the cost of new infrastructure was shared between air passengers at all their airports. But now that Gatwick is privately owned all the cost of a new runway would fall only on Gatwick passengers.

The study uses figures produced by the Airports Commission to show that airport charges per passenger at Gatwick would need to rise from £8 to £33.60 - an extra £50 per return flight.

## Thank you

Our appeal to our members has proved a great success, thank you to all those who sent a donation for your generous support. Our funds do not quite enable us to match the advertising campaign by Gatwick, but they do enable us to give our volunteers the ammunition they need. Please also help us by -

1. Volunteering to help GACC for example by manning a stall or attending an event.
2. Making sure that your local parish council, and your local Borough / District council is firmly opposed to a new runway. Making sure that your parish council and your local amenity society are members of GACC. The more members we have, the stronger our voice.
3. Putting up the 'Gatwick's Big Enough' car stickers, and asking your friends to do so - ask us if you need more stickers.