

July 2011

**Our success
depends on
your support**

TAKE OFF

The journal of HACAN



**Campaigning to
win again!**

Consultation on New Aviation Policy

In March the Government began consulting on its new aviation policy. It published what it called its Aviation Scoping Document. It is inviting people to comment on it by the end of September. On page three we give details of the consultation. The final aviation policy won't be published until early 2013.

It is clear, however, that the new policy will be very different from the policy outlined in the 2003 Air Transport White Paper. The Scoping Document confirms the decision to rule out expansion at Heathrow and new runways at Gatwick and Stansted. Transport Secretary Philip Hammond, writing in the document, says: "in maintaining its support for new runways – particularly at Heathrow – in the face of the local environmental impacts and mounting evidence of aviation's growing contribution towards climate change, the previous government got the balance wrong."

Nationally, the new Government will scale back growth. Hammond writes: "The current pace of technological change is not fast enough to reconcile the scale of growth of recent years with meeting our climate change targets or, in relation to some airports, our aspirations on local environmental impacts." He adds "we are not prepared to support the growth at any price." There will be no attempt in the new aviation policy to specify the level of growth at individual airports – as the 2003 White Paper did. It will stick to outlining general principles and an overall framework.



Theresa Villiers became the first Aviation Minister to address the AirportWatch Conference. AirportWatch brings together airport campaign groups from across the country.

- **For more details of the consultation and the HACAN outline response, see page three.**

HACAN Annual General Meeting

**St Anne's Church Hall, Kew Green, Kew Rd, TW9 3AA
7th September
7.30 pm**

Formalities at the AGM are kept to a minimum to allow plenty of time for discussion.

**There is some parking available. The nearest stations are Kew Gardens and Kew Bridge (both about a 7 minute walk).
The 391 and 65 buses stop nearby.**



40 Planes an Hour 20 Miles from Heathrow

Stall at Oval



HACAN stall in May at the Oval, 20 miles from Heathrow. Much interest as so many people longing for relief from constant noise, as many as 40 aircraft an hour

At Vauxhall Summer Fair



HACAN stall at Vauxhall, just a stone's throw from Central London: 15 years' ago a haven of peace and quiet; now, without consultation or compensation, on the direct route to Heathrow

Another plane taking off – *right over me!*



A 10 year old blocks out the noise of a plane over his home in Thorpe near Egham. Much closer to Heathrow than the Oval but under one of the take-off routes where noise has become more disturbing recently. HACAN will be publishing a report shortly outlining what has happened and suggesting ways forward which could improve the situation

Yes, We Can!

It is easy to feel defeated. For more than a decade residents in areas like Vauxhall and the Oval have been calling for some relief from the constant noise. And, in more recent times, people under the take-off flights paths in places like Ham, Staines and Egham have been asking for action. Now, at long last, there are signs that something might happen. There are indications that BAA, the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and some people within the Department for Transport now recognise there is a need for change. As we reported in the last newsletter, the CAA is currently looking at possible changes to airspace over London and the South-East. HACAN has had meetings with them. They are sympathetic to the idea of airspace alternation to give people some relief from the planes. It could be similar to the half-day break that people under the landing flight paths in West London already enjoy. We have also met with BAA to look at how these ideas can be progressed. Political pressure and media exposure would also help, so write to your MP, councillor and local paper to tell them about your plight. We can win!

A New Policy Takes Shape

We outline some of the key themes and HACAN's response to them

HACAN has welcomed:

- The move away from growth at any cost
- A clear recognition that noise is a real problem
- The importance of climate change
- The firm commitment that a 3rd runway and mixed-mode is ruled out at Heathrow
- The support for the rail and tele-conferencing

HACAN is arguing:

- **That aviation is important to the economy but that there is no economic case for expansion at Heathrow.** We understand the business need for international connectivity but show that, if all its airports are considered together, London remains the best-connected city in the world. We show Heathrow does not need to grow as a 'hub' airport for transfer passengers because London's importance as a destination ensures that it will be served by a significant number of flights to key business destinations.
- **Business travel should be prioritised over leisure travel** and that this can be done through fiscal measures such as increasing Air Passenger Duty since business travel is much less sensitive to price increases. We favour slot auctioning.
- **The chance must be taken to put in place a way of measuring noise that better reflects how people hear it.** Leq, the current system which averages out noise, is not up to the job. At the very least another system should be used alongside Leq. Moreover, the official view that people only start getting annoyed by the noise when it averages out at 57 decibels is outdated. The World Health Organisation guidelines, which are a good deal lower, should be used instead.
- **The new idea floated of a 'noise envelope' may not work.** The Scoping Document suggests that, as technology improves, expansion could be allowed within agreed noise limits. Defining those limits would be difficult. At Heathrow it would only work if the noise limits were defined by a cap on the number of flights.

Timetable

March 30th: Scoping Document published for consultation

July: Government publishes new forecasts for future air travel

July: Government responds to the Committee on Climate Change's recommendation that aviation growth will need to be curbed if UK is to meet its targets to cut CO2

September 30th: Consultation ends

March 2012: Draft Policy Framework for public consultation published

By March 2013: New aviation policy adopted

- **Airspace should be shared** to give relief to residents who are currently living in 'noise ghettos', often many miles from Heathrow.

The ultimate solution is for Heathrow to operate at 80% capacity rather than 99%. It would be good for business, the environment and local residents:

- Bob Ayling, the former chief executive of British Airways, has consistently argued that the big disincentive to business people using Heathrow is not the number of destinations it serves but the delays at the airport. He puts this down to the fact that it is operating close to capacity: "instead of operating at 99% capacity, Heathrow should be operating at 80%." He says that Heathrow should concentrate on direct flights as "a sensible approach and a good basis for planning the future of Heathrow, leaving Paris and Amsterdam to invest in the costly capital assets of a hub."

- If Heathrow operated at 80% capacity, it would cap aircraft numbers at 384,000 a year, below the number using the airport in the mid-1990s. For communities many miles from the airport aircraft noise would no longer be a problem. For people closer to the airport, the reduction in the number of planes would be noticeable.

The full HACAN response will be on our website in July.

To respond to the consultation

Email: aviation.policyframework@dft.gov.uk or by post: Aviation Policy Framework, Department for Transport; Great Minister House (1/24), 76 Marsham St, London SW1P 4DR. **Hard copies of the document can be obtained from the same address. It is also on www.dft.gov.uk**

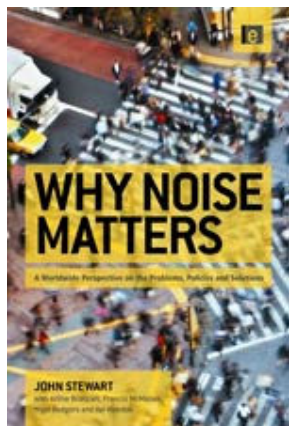
Night Flight Consultation in Spring 2012

The night flight decision will be “one of the most important issues I will face as a Minister.”

Theresa Villiers

The consultation on night flights has been postponed. Speaking on 24th May in an adjournment debate in Parliament, initiated by Brentford and Isleworth Conservative MP Mary Macleod, Aviation Minister Theresa Villiers announced that the Government will issue a detailed consultation on a new night flight regime at Heathrow, Stansted and Gatwick “next spring.” It had been expected this year but the decision to postpone reflects the Government’s desire to look at night flights in the context of its wider aviation policy. It may mean that current agreement with the airlines which ends in October 2012 will need to be extended for another year. The Government hasn’t taken a final decision on that. Currently 16 flights are permitted between 11.30 and 6am each night. As reported in the last *Take Off*, HACAN has published a report arguing it would make economic sense to ban those flights. We have had a number of meetings with Theresa Villiers on the subject. Whatever decision she finally makes, it is evident to us that she is seriously assessing the different options.

Stop Press! BA chief executive Willie Walsh has said that a third runway at Heathrow “will never be built” and that British Airways were looking for expansion at Madrid Airport after their recent link-up with Iberian Airways. It does look as if finally the third runway has been killed off. It’s most enthusiastic backers, British Airways, are now planning for life without a new runway.



Why Noise Matters

A Worldwide Perspective on the Problems, Policies and Solutions

By John Stewart with Arline Bronzaft, Francis McManus, Nigel Rodgers and Val Weedon

Drawing on evidence from all over the world, this book showcases policies and strategies that have worked to decrease noise

pollution, and offers lessons for policymakers and environmental health professionals, campaigners and any individual affected by noise.

£24.99

Paperback

August 2011 • 220 pages • 234 x 156mm • ISBN 9781849712576

Information

Track Flight Paths on Screen

Check out Webtrak on www.baa.com/noise

BAA Complaints Line - 0800 344 844

It is not usually staffed. The service is useful for getting factual advice or registering a complaint. But don’t expect much action from BAA.

If you want regular news by email.....

The newsletter comes out twice a year. If you want to receive it by email us on info@hacan.org.uk If you want a more regular update on news, events and actions you can take, sign up to *Update* which is emailed out to people usually about once a month.

Check the Newspapers

For a daily digest of aviation stories carried by the national media, try the excellent (and free!) website: www.transportinfo.org.uk

Our Administrator, Nicky Warren, writes:

A big thank-you to all of you who regularly renew your membership. Just four things that would make my life so much easier:

- If you can renew as soon as possible after the first request, it would save us the cost of sending a reminder letter and maybe deleting you altogether! It would also help if you let us know if you decide not to renew.
- On the renewal form can you fill in the boxes if you are able to help us with any of the three things mentioned, even if you have told us previously. It helps keep our records up-to- date.
- If you send us a cheque, please give your full address and membership number as well as your name as there are a number of members with the same name.
- If you send us a donation, please make it clear that it is a donation in addition to your membership subscription. It gets complicated if you send a donation in lieu of your subscription.
- And, please, please, print your email addresses twice!

Reports on our Website

You can read the reports mentioned in the newsletter on our website – recently ranked amongst the top 30 websites covering noise issues. Dare you miss it!

Take Off

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