

# **TUNBRIDGE WELLS AGAINST AIRCRAFT NOISE GROUP TWAANG**

## **GATWICK AIRPORT MASTER PLAN CONSULTATION EXHIBITION**

Royal Victoria Place Shopping Centre, Saturday 10 November, 11:00-17:00.

### **TWAANG'S COMMENTS ON BEHALF OF THE TUNBRIDGE WELLS CONURBATION**

This exhibition is being held to promote Gatwick's plans for the future and as such needs to be viewed with care. Gatwick's comments should not be accepted at face value.

We think that the 'consultation' process is flawed as exhibitions are not being held in areas most affected by Gatwick's operations (eg Reigate, Redhill, Dorking, Lingfield). Most of the five exhibitions are either being held in areas either scarcely affected (Croydon, Brighton) or likely to be supportive (Crawley). Horsham and Tunbridge Wells are possible exceptions.

We attach copies of leaflets provided by fellow Community Noise Groups GACC and CAGNE, they provide useful guidance on points to think about before responding to Gatwick's feedback questionnaire.

*We strongly suggest that you do not respond immediately to the Feedback Questionnaire at the exhibition, but take time to consider the questions and their implications. The list of questions is also attached, taken from the Master Plan Consultation Document, copies of which should be available at the exhibition.*

Other points about the Master Plan proposals which are particularly relevant to Tunbridge Wells:

- Increased traffic pushes arrivals Eastwards from Langton Green towards central Tunbridge Wells. This is seen on summer evenings when the arrivals peak moves from Langton Green eastwards from 5:00pm onwards. Gatwick's plans will make this worse.
- Delays cause arrivals in the evening to be pushed into the night period (formally from 11:30pm) at busy times, and increased traffic as proposed will increase the problem. A significant proportion of 'night arrivals' are already caused by delays rather than scheduled arrivals.
- The World Health Organisation (WHO) recognise annoyance as a health issue, and annoyance is experienced well outside the noise boundaries formally recognised as significant by the aviation industry, as displayed on Gatwick's maps which will be shown at the exhibition.
- The areas significantly affected by aircraft noise as shown in the Gatwick maps are almost exclusively under the fixed final approach track (ILS), where there is little scope for improvement in a situation that has applied for years. Increased traffic will only make this position worse.
- The WHO's latest report comments that noise levels causing health problems are now recognised as lower than previously thought, and especially at night. For the layman, night

might be thought to begin at 10:00pm (earlier for children), whereas formal controls for night flights begin at 11:30pm, although even these controls are regularly breached by delayed flights.

- Gatwick like to say that new aircraft are quieter, which is largely true. But aircraft are an expensive investment and their operational life is typically 30 years; it is expected that it will take easyJet 15 years for 90% of its fleet to be of the newer types, and other operators at Gatwick may well take longer.
- There is no such thing as a quiet aircraft, newer models may be quieter but Gatwick need to make faster progress in ensuring that pilots and Air Traffic Controllers enable full advantage to be taken of their capabilities; a 'quiet' aircraft flown badly is still noisy. We are told that the newer types (eg Airbus neo series, Boeing 787 and 737 Max models) are '50% quieter'; we are uncertain what that means when we are overflown.
- Even if the noise levels of individual aircraft are reduced over time, the significant increase in numbers proposed by Gatwick seem more than likely to outweigh this, and the increase will happen sooner. It is the frequency of flights which really upsets people.
- Attempts to spread the arrivals and their disturbance (Fair and Equitable Distribution - FED - as requested by the Community Noise Groups at the Noise Management Board) have failed as current Air Traffic Control techniques are unable to achieve this. The inability of the NMB to deliver significant improvements and failure of several initiatives have led to tensions at the NMB, not reflected in comments in the Master Plan.

When you are ready, the link for responses to Gatwick's Master Plan proposals is:  
[ipsos.uk/draftmasterplan](https://ipsos.uk/draftmasterplan)

**This consultation will run from 18 October 2018 to 5pm on 10 January 2019.**

Please use your own words when responding.

TWAANG  
7 November 2018

Attachments:

- List of Consultation Feedback questions
- CAGNE Response document
- GACC Response leaflet