

Gatwick Airport Aviation Noise Information

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Introduction



This booklet is designed to provide aviation noise information to current and prospective residents of the area around Gatwick Airport to equip them with knowledge and understanding of the operation and flight routes of aircraft using the airport.

Gatwick Airport Limited (GAL) endeavours to be a good neighbour. This booklet is designed to provide an overview of the airport's operations and to show how both arriving and departing aircraft using Gatwick can be expected to be seen in particular locations.

We know that Gatwick's global connectivity is an attraction to many people who consider moving to the area, because being able to make use of this is an important business or lifestyle choice. We also recognise that moving house is an important

decision and, alongside professional property advisers, banks, solicitors and building societies, we want to do all we can to help you get it right.

This booklet contains maps and information relating to the direction of operation of the runway, ground noise, aircraft arrivals and departures, aircraft holding stacks, go-arounds, weather deviations and night time flying, in order to provide a comprehensive overview of the causes of aircraft noise.

Please do take the time to look at the [online information link](#) to find more information about Gatwick Airport.

Stewart Wingate
Chief Executive Officer, Gatwick Airport Ltd

The National Association of Estate Agents (NAEA), is the UK's number one regulatory body for ensuring estate agent standards and codes of practice. The NAEA is pivotal in driving Government policy and commissioning relevant and thought provoking reports for the housing industry.

The NAEA is the UK's leading professional body for estate agency personnel; representing over

7,000 members who practise across all aspects of property services. We are dedicated to the goal of professionalism within all aspects of property, estate agency and land. Our aim is to reassure the general public that by appointing an NAEA member to represent them, they will receive in return the highest level of integrity and service for all property matters.

“ We commend Gatwick Airport for producing this booklet and are pleased to note that this is available on the Gatwick Airport noise webpage. Both the noise booklet and the dedicated webpage provides a wealth of information for both current and future neighbours of the Airport and we encourage you to make use of these tools.

Buying or renting a home can be one of the most important decisions that most people will ever make, so it is imperative that you do your research and make the best informed decision you can. Our member Estate Agents will help with this process and we will continue to work with Gatwick Airport to further improve information for communities.

Mark Hayward FNAEA (Honoured) FNAVA, NAEA Propertymark, Chief Executive

Gatwick Airport

Gatwick Airport is the UK's second largest airport and the most efficient single-runway airport in the world. It serves more than 228 destinations in 74 countries for 44 million passengers a year on short and long-haul point-to-point services. It is also a major economic driver for the South East region, generating around 24,000 on-airport jobs and a further 12,000 jobs through related activities.

Moving into or around the Gatwick area

In order to consider fully what you may or may not find acceptable when purchasing or renting a property in an area where there is aircraft activity, it is a good idea to spend as much time as possible in that area at various hours of the day and during use of both the easterly and westerly runway directions. That way it is possible to assess whether the level of noise is acceptable to you.

More than 100 aircraft are based at Gatwick. Most of them leave the airport for the first time each day between 05:30 and 08:30 and make their last landing between 21:30 and

midnight. As Gatwick's runway may be used in either an easterly or westerly direction, with varying numbers of aircraft at different times of the day, night or week. Please take the time to visit the area at varying times and days.

We cannot over-stress the importance of this personal research, as when buying or renting a home we all look at planning applications, flood risk, road and rail networks and schools. Any effects of aircraft activity must be considered with the same importance.

In order to find out as much information as you can, visit the 'business and community' section of our website for further information and to

explore our online dedicated community portal, 'Casper'. Within Casper, you can track aircraft over a specific postcode of your choice, or research within the complaints tab, to establish how residents within specific postcode zones have reported issues with aircraft. The web address for Casper is noiselab.casper.aero/lgw/



Aircraft Operations

Runway Direction

It is important for the safe operation of aircraft that they both land and take-off into wind. On take-off, this will reduce the ground speed required to produce the lift to get airborne. On landing, it will again result in a lower groundspeed which significantly improves the safety margins in this critical phase of flight.

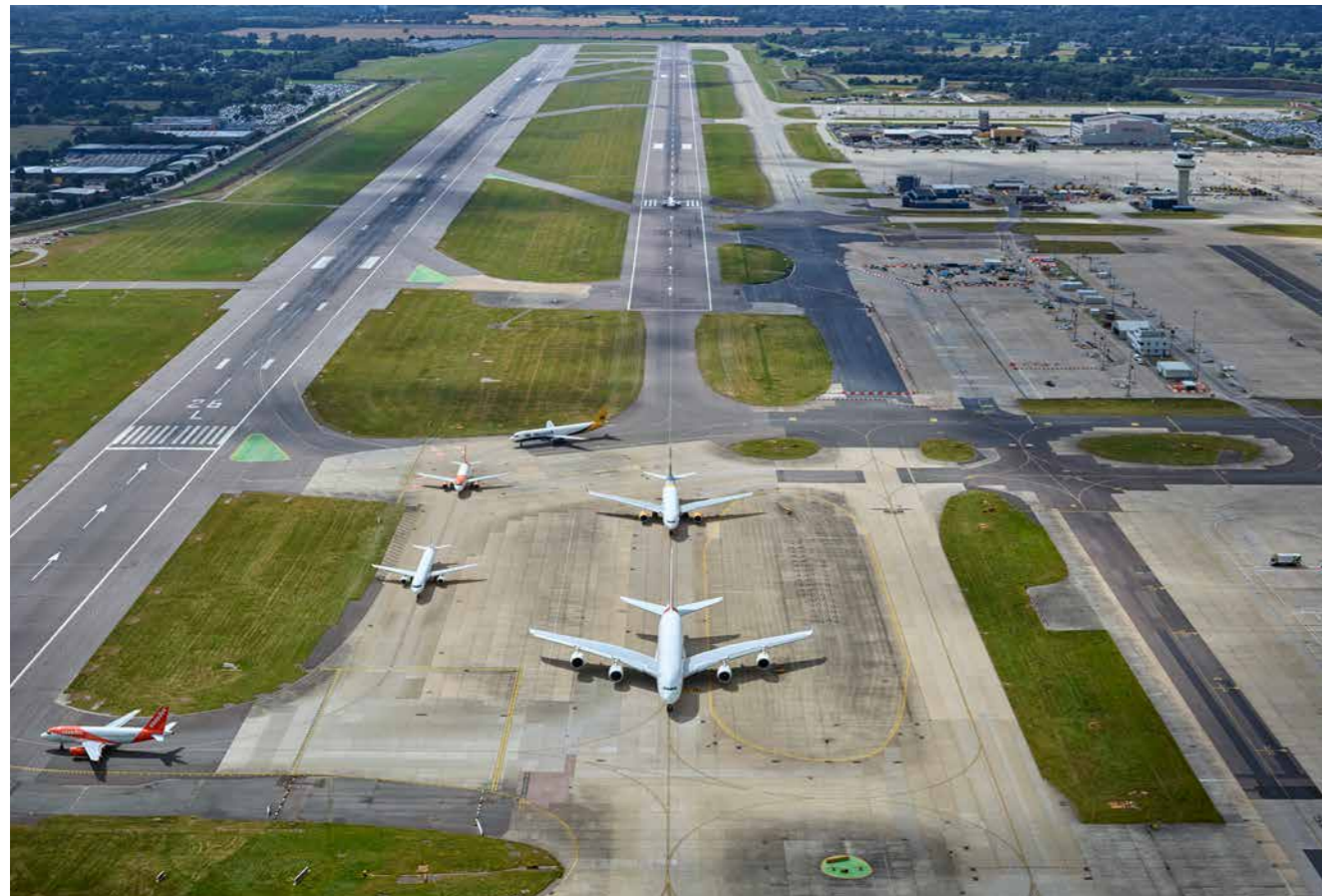
When the wind is from west to east, the airport will operate “westerly operations”. Aircraft will approach Gatwick from the east and depart towards the west. The opposite, “easterly operations”, are used when the wind blows east to west.

In recent years, on average around 70% of aircraft operations have been in a westerly direction and around 30% in an easterly direction. However this ratio does fluctuate, and weather conditions may mean prolonged periods of one operation or another.

The direction of operation is something which is considered carefully by Air Traffic Control (ATC) in the interests of safe operations, giving consideration to wind on the runway and at 1,000ft and 2,000ft, the initial stages of take-off and the final stages of approach.

Different types of aircraft noise

Communities surrounding Gatwick Airport can experience aircraft noise disturbance for various reasons. Certain areas are adjacent to the airport and as such hear ‘ground noise’, others lie beneath the approach path for inbound aircraft or below the departure routes. Some experience aircraft ‘holding’ within holding stacks or when aircraft are re-routed to avoid cells of bad weather, or go-arounds which are aborted landings that tend to fly over areas that don’t normally experience aircraft activity. These reasons are all explained further on the following pages.



Airport operating directions



Departures

Living under a flight path and hearing and seeing planes take off

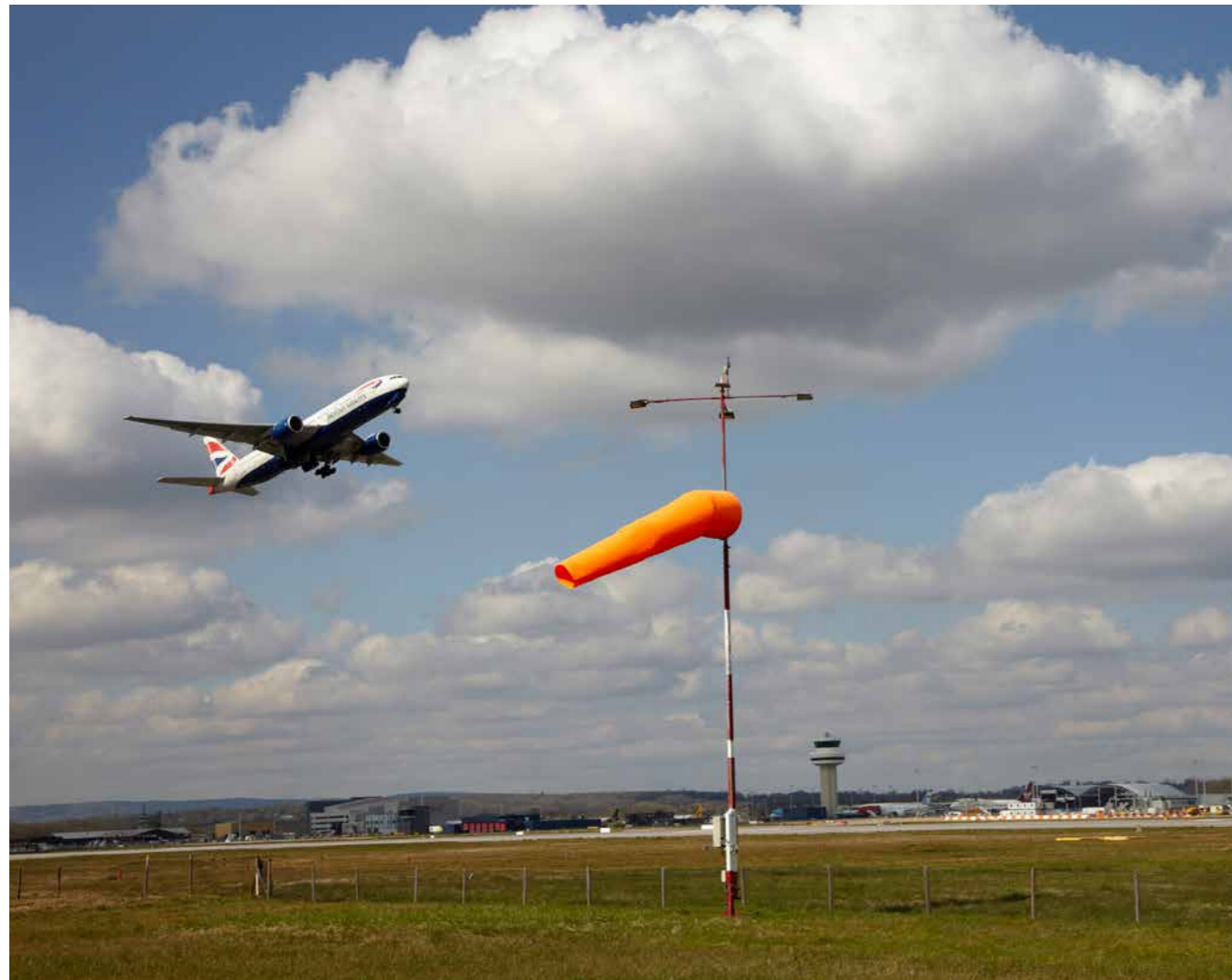
All aircraft leaving Gatwick Airport should follow flight paths contained within Noise Preferential Routes (NPRs) up to an altitude of 3,000ft or 4,000ft depending on the route. NPRs were set by the Department for Transport (DfT) in the 1960s and were designed to avoid over flight of built-up areas where possible. The Standard Instrument Departures (SID) they contain lead from the runway to the main UK air traffic routes.

An NPR consists of a 'centreline' and an associated compliance monitoring swathe (3km across, i.e. 1.5km either side of the NPR centreline). As long as aircraft remain within this 'swathe' they are deemed to be on track. There is no requirement to remain in a particular position within the NPR.

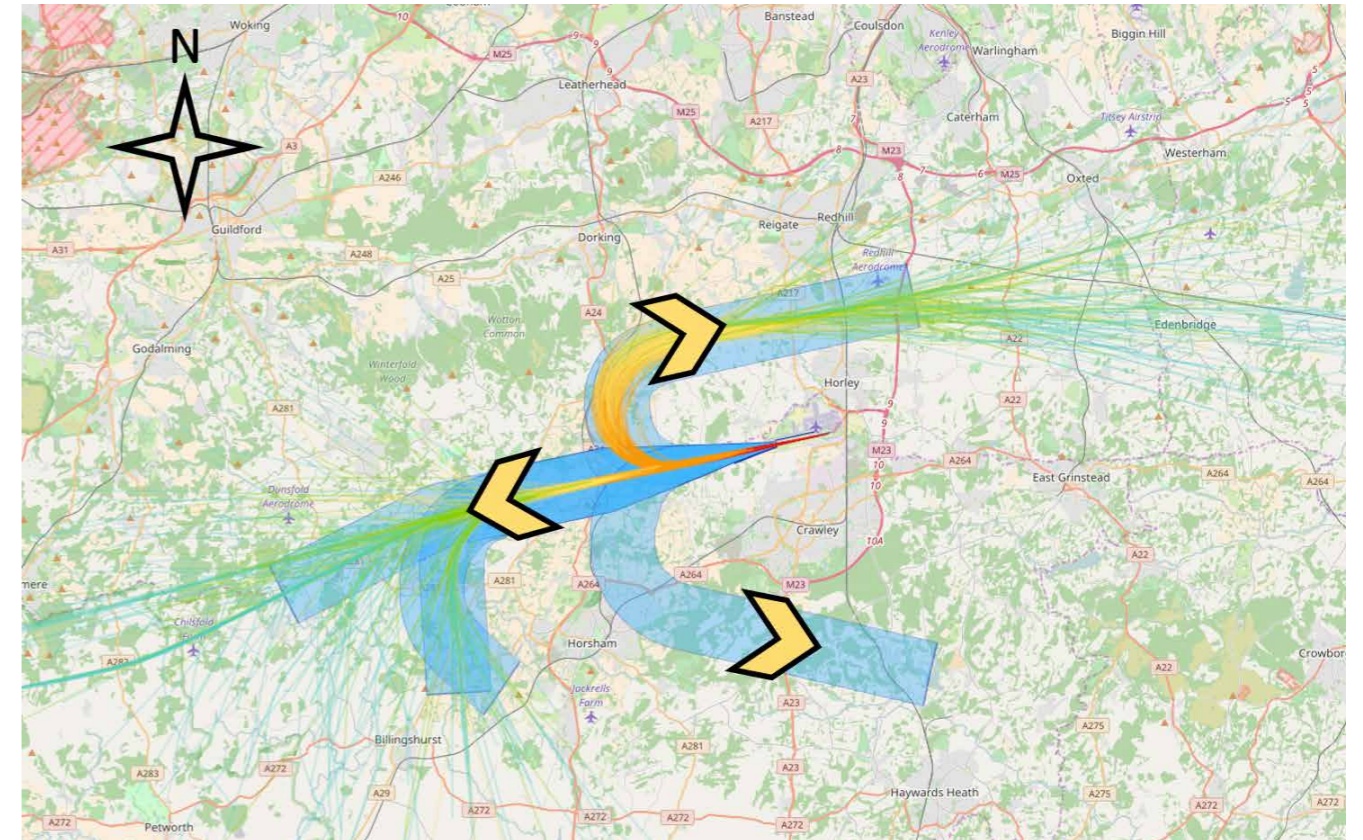
These NPRs have not been altered since they were established. Their location remains the responsibility of the Government. As an airport operator, Gatwick Airport has no authority to change an NPR.



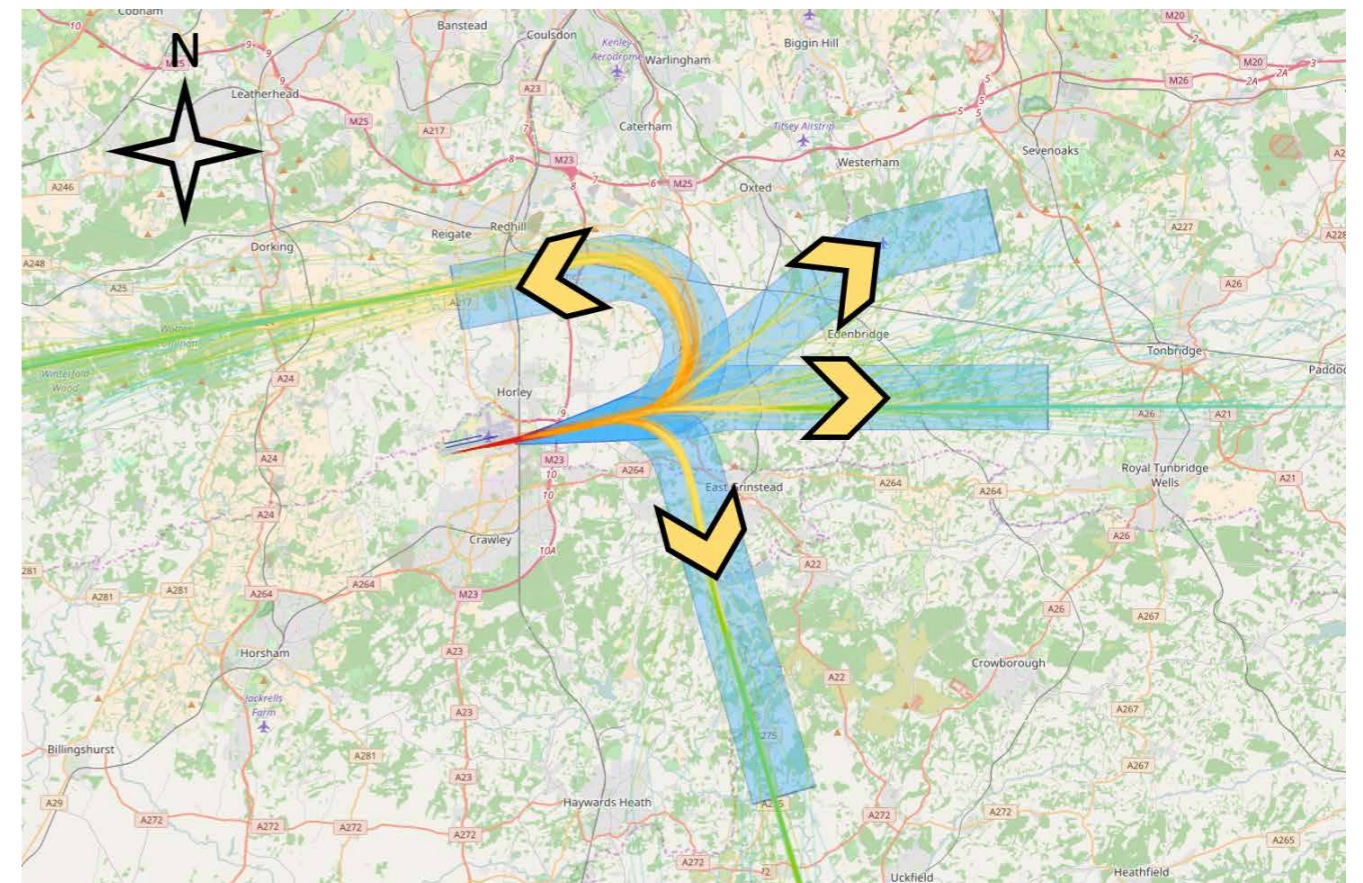
Any significant changes to the NPRs would be subject to public consultation.



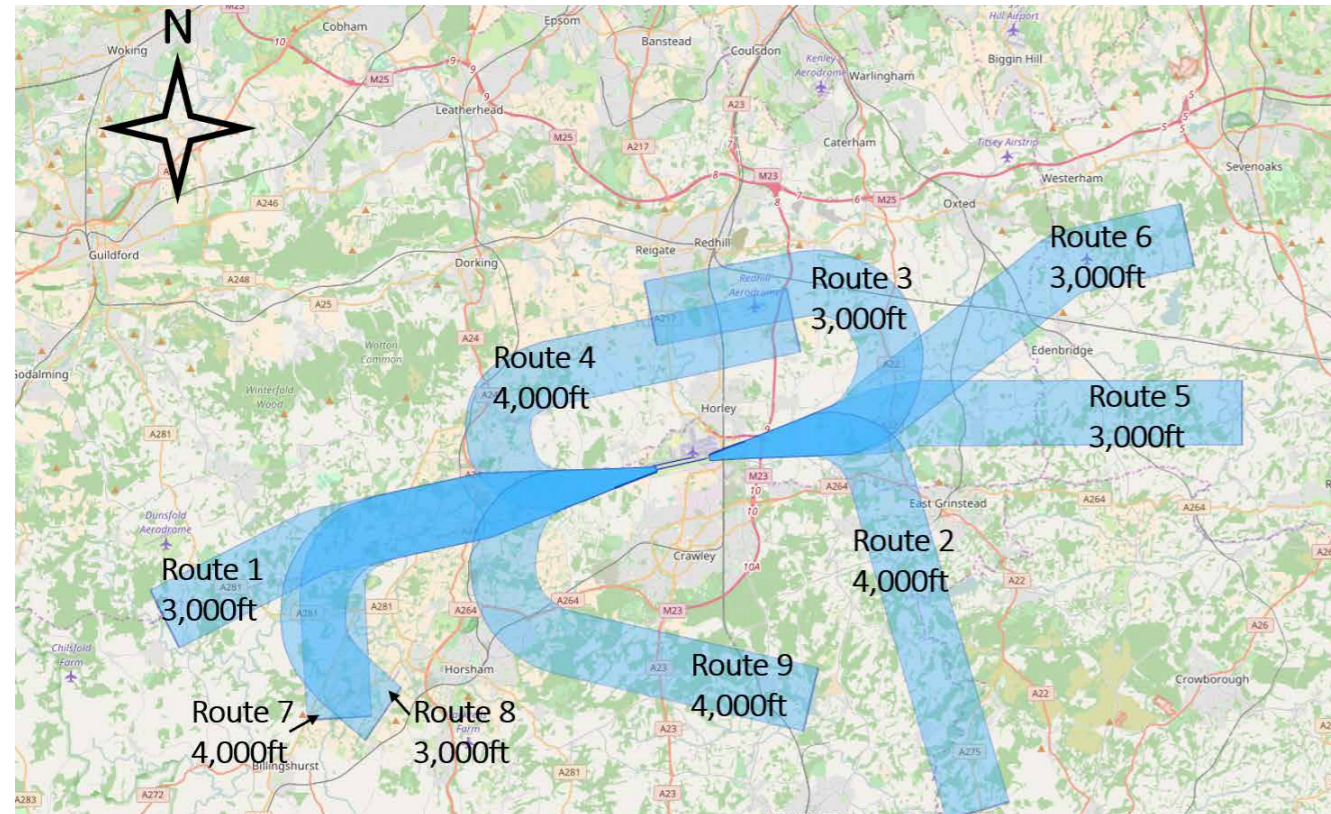
A typical day of departures, on westerly operations



A typical day of departures, on easterly operations



Gatwick's noise preferential routes and their minimum altitudes



There are no financial sanctions against airlines that fly off track as there are many factors, including speed, wind, weight and temperature that can affect the performance of an aircraft. Also, some Gatwick routes have turns of 90° and 180° which, when they were first designed, were easier to fly with older, slower aircraft.

Apart from the previously mentioned factors, Air Traffic

Control (ATC) may authorise aircraft to leave a route early if adverse weather conditions are apparent further along the route. This is done for safety reasons to ensure aircraft do not fly through areas of storm activity. Therefore, if an aircraft leaves the NPR it is not necessarily doing anything 'wrong'.

How often a particular NPR is utilised will vary and is an operational decision taken by

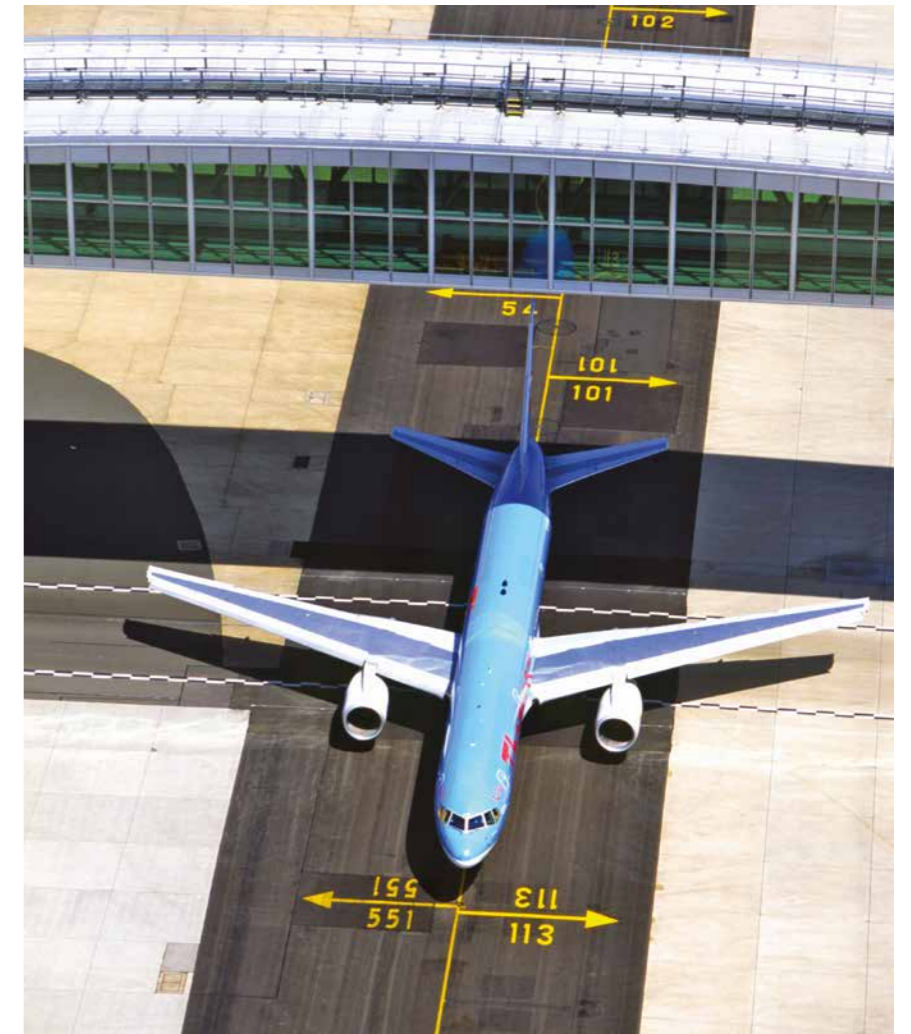
ATC and airlines. In making this decision, the final destination of the aircraft, overall flight traffic at that time and weather conditions both locally and along the aircraft's intended route are taken into account.

An aircraft being vectored, after achieving the NPR minimum height



Vectoring

Once aircraft have climbed through 3,000ft or 4,000ft and are above minimum height of their NPR, NATS take responsibility and may give a flight a more direct heading (known as vectoring). This is subject to certain factors including weather conditions and/or other traffic in the vicinity. Therefore, aircraft may be seen on departure leaving the lateral confines of the NPR and flying directly to its destination once above the minimum height of the NPR.



Arrivals

Living under the approach path and hearing planes coming in to land

Unlike departing aircraft that have set routes to follow during the initial stages of flight, there are no such defined routes leading to the final approach for inbound aircraft; neither are there any noise limits nor fixed heights.

ATC ensure that aircraft arriving into UK airspace are sequenced for safe separation by controlling the speed and headings flown prior to the aircraft being turned on to final approach and aircraft are then directed onto the Instrument Landing System (ILS).

This is because arrivals come into UK airspace along one of a number of Standard Approach Routes (STARs) and then have to be sequenced to ensure safe separation. When the airport is busy, arriving aircraft may be held by ATC in a holding pattern within a 'stack' before being instructed to make their final approach.

The ILS is a beam which is aligned with the runway centreline in order to guide aircraft in a straight line approach to the runway threshold for landing. It consists of two signals, one giving vertical guidance (the glide slope) and the other indicating

whether to fly left or right in order to line up with the runway (the localiser).

The beam has a projected range which extends out a horizontal distance of 25 nautical miles (nm). The glide slope at Gatwick Airport is set at 3 degrees, which is the angle recommended by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) for commercial aviation for safety purposes. Steeper angles are generally only accepted if required to avoid obstacles. Landing is a very busy and critical stage of flight and it is essential that aircraft are stabilised in their approach

some distance from touchdown.

This means that the aircraft must be set up for landing, not turning and be stable in its approach speed.

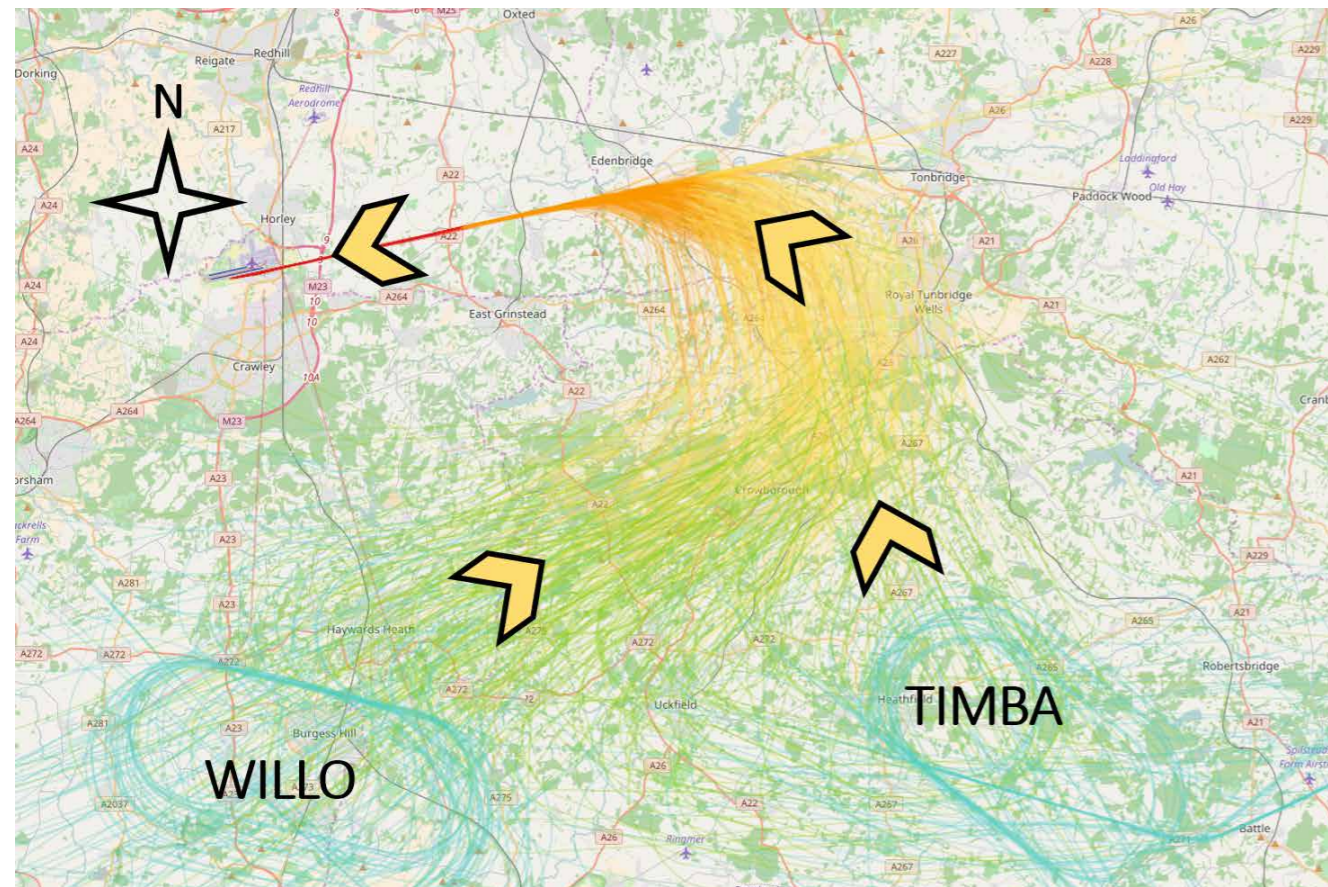
To achieve this stability and in the interests of proper separation, ATC has discretion over where it directs aircraft to join the ILS so as to allow aircraft to be stabilised at an appropriate distance from touchdown and to arrive in a straight line down to the runway. Consequently any area

beneath the ILS will be over flown by arriving aircraft as can areas to the side of the ILS which may be overflown by aircraft en-route to joining the approach path. Aircraft arriving at Gatwick Airport will mostly be joining the ILS from the south due to airspace restrictions caused by the proximity of air traffic associated with Heathrow Airport, to the north, and other airspace restrictions.

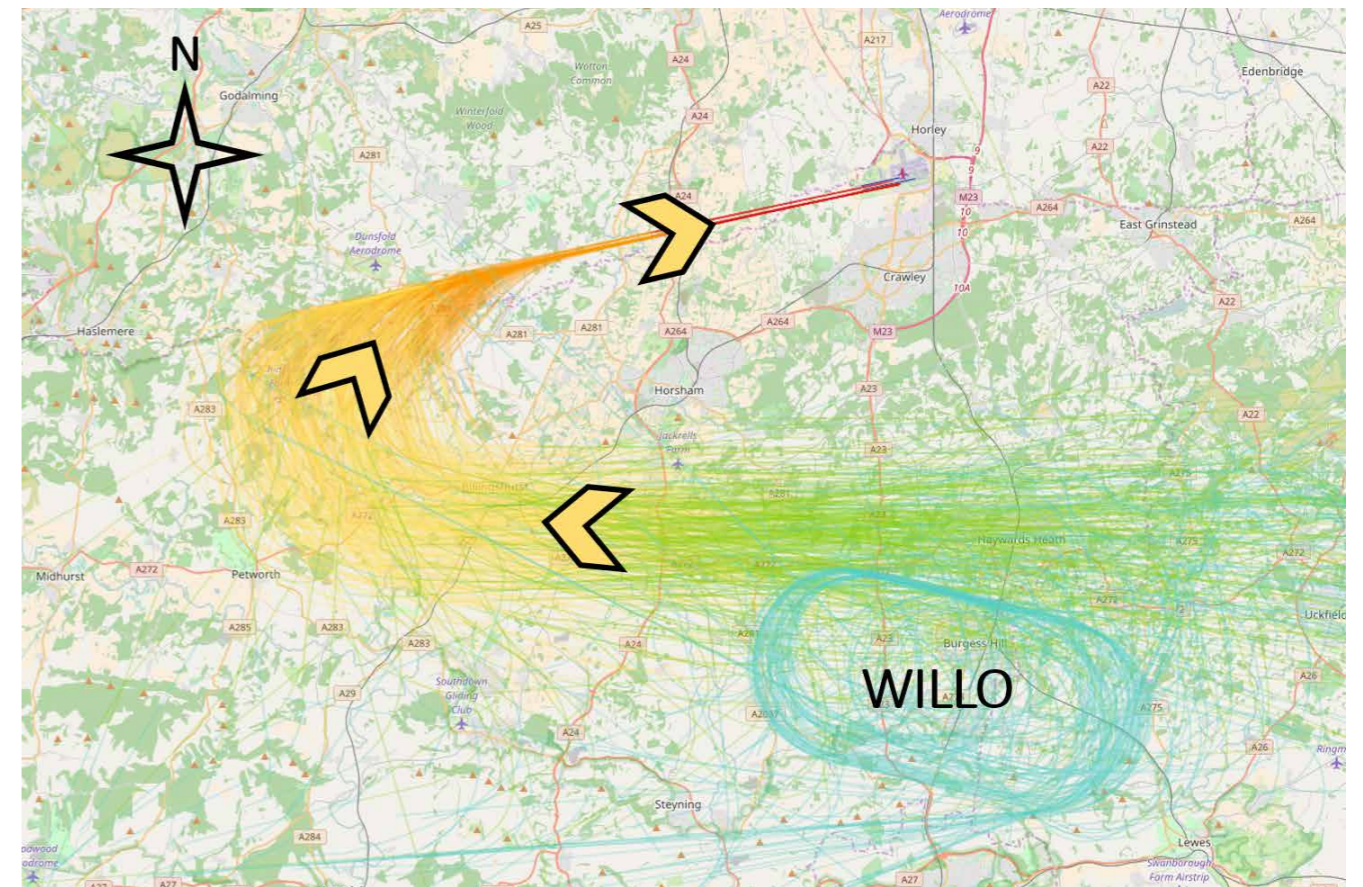
An Arrivals Code of Practice (ACoP) ([available here](#)) has been formulated to define and incorporate best practice procedures for minimising noise from arriving aircraft. The group responsible for the ACoP comprised airlines, ATC, Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and Government representatives



A typical day of arrivals, on westerly operations



A typical day of arrivals, on easterly operations



Living between an aircraft stack and the airport and hearing planes heading for the final approach

As previously mentioned, when airports are busy, there can be a build up of aircraft waiting to land. ATC must ensure there is a safe gap between each aircraft as they come in to land. To achieve this aircraft will sometimes circle in a fixed pattern known as a stack or hold until air traffic controllers are able to fit them into the landing pattern. Gatwick Airport has two holds known as 'TIMBA' and 'WILLO.' The map on page 13 shows their location.

These stacks have been in the same locations since the 1960s. The DfT is responsible for the location of stacks and they could not be moved without a public airspace change consultation.



The minimum height aircraft have to be in a stack is 7,000ft, however aircraft do fly under the stacks at lower altitudes.

People living between the stack and the final approach will hear aircraft noise as aircraft leave the stack and make their way to the final approach to Gatwick Airport. As there are no set heights or routes for arriving aircraft, once they have left the stack aircraft are directed

tactically by ATC to ensure they are safely sequenced in the airspace for arrival.

People living or working anywhere between the stacks and the final approach to the airport will be over flown by arriving aircraft and therefore may be affected by aircraft noise.

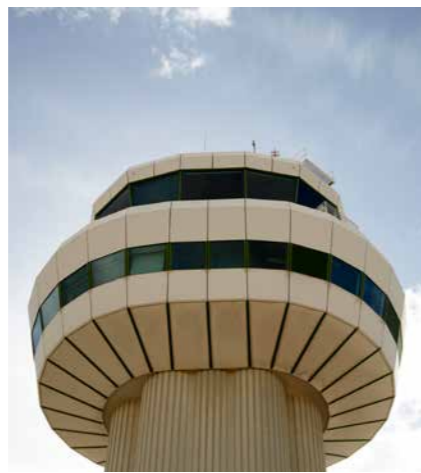
Go-arounds

A go-around is a procedure adopted when an arriving aircraft on final approach aborts landing by applying take off power and climbing away from the Airport. It is a set procedure to be followed by the flight crew in the event of an aircraft being unable to land.

The procedure is published so that ATC and the pilots can anticipate where the aircraft will go following the decision to go-around.

The standard missed approach procedure applicable at Gatwick requires aircraft that are aborting their approach to climb to 3,000ft straight ahead then turn south.

This may result in aircraft overflying the town of Crawley or the outlying areas.



The missed approach procedure is a safety critical manoeuvre and is not a noise abatement procedure. Please note that whilst there are set procedures for go-arounds for each direction of runway utilisation, aircraft can be directed elsewhere by ATC in the interests of safety and separation from other aircraft.

A go-around is a perfectly safe procedure. It is well practised and designed to prevent a potentially dangerous situation from arising. ATC procedures allow Air Traffic

Controllers to confidently predict the path to be followed by an aircraft with the minimum of further instructions.

As go-arounds are operated to ensure safety, they are not subject to sanctions.

There are many reasons for this procedure. These include but are not limited to:

- On the ground, a previously landed aircraft may be slow to vacate the runway or a departure may be slow to take off after receiving clearance.
- The runway may be closed for inspection by Airfield Operations following a report of debris or other contamination on the runway.
- There may be bird activity in the vicinity of the runway or a reported bird strike which would necessitate a runway inspection.

- In the air a pilot may report a temporary technical problem that would prevent landing or passengers may not be seated in which case the cabin is deemed to be insecure.
- Adverse weather conditions such as cross-winds or wind shear can make the approach 'unstable'.
- Poor visibility. This is especially relevant when Gatwick is operating on the standby or 'northern runway' which is a visual runway without an ILS.

Initiation of a go-around procedure may either be ordered by ATC or by the pilot in command of the aircraft.

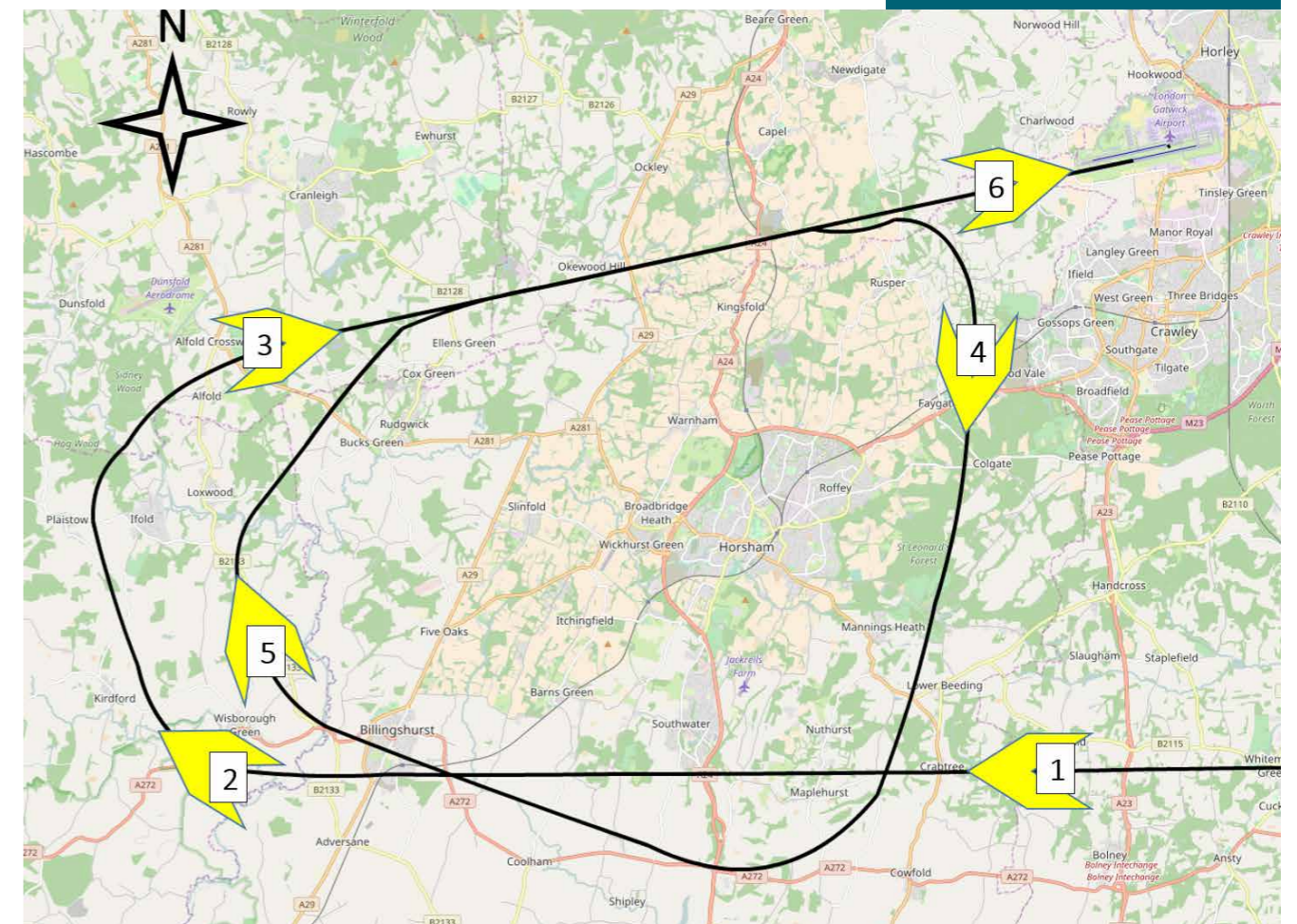
In the event of a go-around and if another aircraft is involved, as might happen if a departure has just taken off, ATC must ensure the two aircraft are safely separated. This is achieved by instructing one of the aircraft to turn earlier than usual. In most situations, this instruction is given to the following aircraft, that is to say the one performing the go-around is faster than the one in front, as safe separation can be rapidly eroded.

A go-around may be the reason if you see or hear an aircraft close by the Airport where you don't normally see them. At Gatwick all go-arounds are instructed to head to the south to avoid coming into conflict with outbound traffic.

Track of a go-around

1. Initial approach
2. Aircraft turns towards final approach
3. Aircraft intercepts the ILS for final approach
4. Go-around commenced, aircraft turns to the south
5. Aircraft turns towards final approach for second time
6. Landing

A missed approach and go-around



Continuous Descent Operations

There are no noise limits for arriving aircraft, however there are various noise abatement procedures in force to minimise the impact of arriving aircraft.

Subject to safety requirements, one of the main noise abatement measures identified in the ACoP is Continuous Descent Operations (CDO). CDO is a noise abatement technique for arriving aircraft in which a pilot descends at a steady rate with the intention of achieving a continuous descent. The intention is to join the glide path at the correct height for the distance to enable a continuous descent without recourse to level flight. This procedure thereby

avoids the need for extended periods of level flight at lower altitudes and results in keeping the aircraft higher for longer reducing the need for thrust.

In addition to aiding noise reduction, this also reduces fuel burn thereby cutting emissions and producing an overall environmental benefit.

CDO is a procedure designed to try and avoid prolonged periods of level flight below 7,000ft at Gatwick Airport. Studies have determined that elements of prolonged level flight are noisier than when following CDO.

The following text appears in the UK Aeronautical Information Publication (AIP) Noise Abatement Procedures for Gatwick Airport:

“For monitoring purposes, a descent will be deemed to have been continuous provided that no segment of level flight longer than 2.5 nautical miles (nm) occurs below 7000ft QNH and ‘level flight’ is interpreted as any segment of flight having a height change of not more than 50ft over a track distance of 2 nm or more, as recorded in the airport Noise and Track keeping system.

A CDO is not a precise art, it is not set to a specific angle or rate of descent and relies on the accuracy of track miles provided by ATC to the flight crew coupled with pilot skill, weather conditions and operational circumstances. Additionally, different aircraft types perform differently requiring varying

operating practices to be utilised in order to slow the aircraft down and meet speed restrictions. Therefore, the procedures in the ACoP are advisory rather than compulsory. There are no sanctions against pilots or airlines that fail to comply with the measures.

Nevertheless, publication of the ACoP has resulted in significant improvements in CDO achievement during the day and night. Airlines and pilots are keen to adopt this procedure for economic as well as environmental reasons.

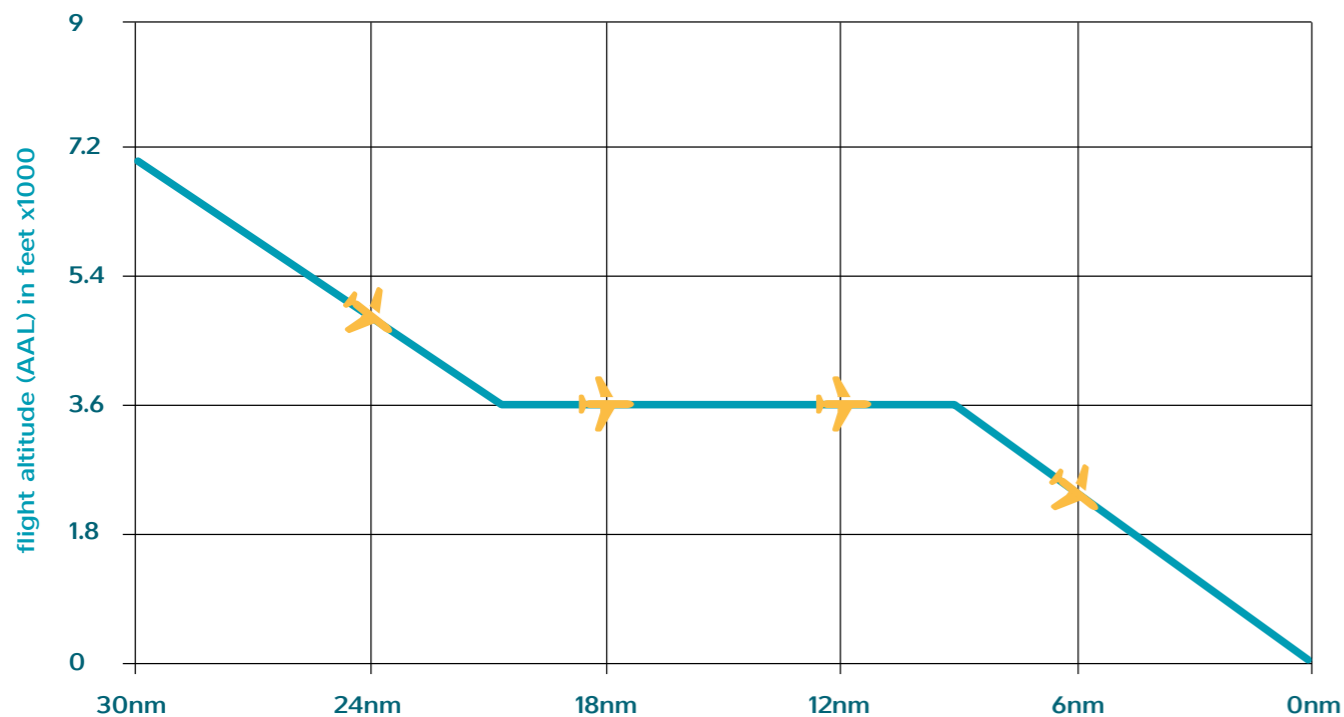
In 2016, 89.75% of aircraft arriving at Gatwick performed a CDO.

Apart from CDO, there are other long standing procedures

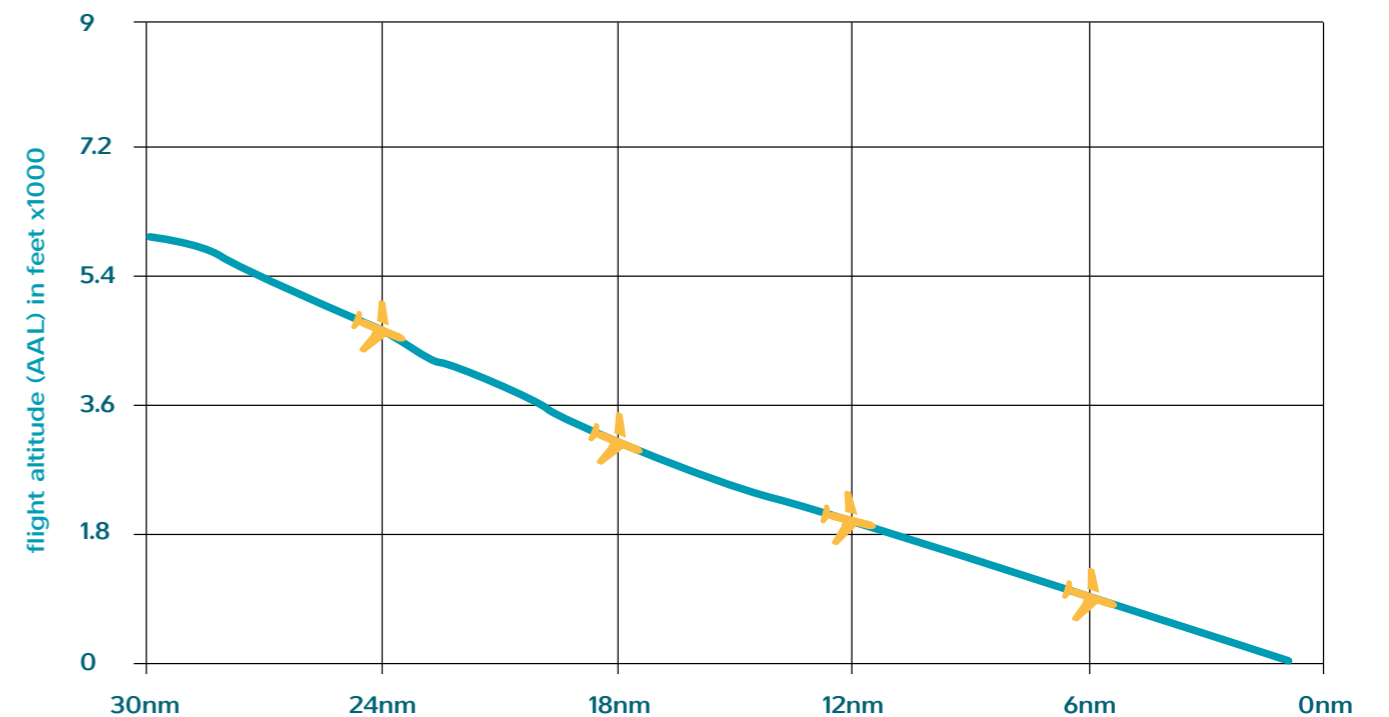
in place to mitigate disturbance. These apply to night time operations with the aim of keeping aircraft as high as possible for as long as possible. For example, there are specific distances and heights at which aircraft are required to be established on the ILS for final approach. Between 23:30 and 05:59 aircraft are required to join the ILS at not less than 3000ft and not within 8nm of the airport. All these procedures are monitored by a Noise and Track Keeping System at Gatwick Airport and cases of non-compliance are taken up with ATC and/or the airlines. They are also reported at bi-monthly meetings of our Flight Operations Performance & Safety Committee (FLOPSC).

This Committee was formed to ensure the development of best practice by airline operators using Gatwick. The Committee is made up of representatives of Gatwick Airport, the Department for Transport, Air Traffic Control service providers and airlines operating at the Airport.

A non CDO compliant approach



A CDO compliant approach



Other Types of Flights

Night time flying

There is not, and never has been, a ban on flights operating to and from Gatwick Airport at any time of the night. However, in order to try to balance the interests of the all local communities and those of the airport users, for instance passengers, freight, time sensitive goods, aircraft emergencies and business, there are stringent restrictions and rules in place governing how the airport manages night time flights.

Night flying restrictions are divided into summer and winter seasons. They consist of a movement limit and a quota count system. The quota count refers to a points system allocated to different aircraft types according to how noisy or quiet they are. The noisier the aircraft type, the higher the points allocated. This provides an incentive for airlines to use quieter aircraft types.

The Department for Transport (DfT) is responsible for defining the restrictions on the types of aircraft that can be scheduled to fly at night and the number of aircraft movements. In setting the night flying regime, the aim is to encourage the use of the quietest aircraft types with a limited number of movements.

Aircraft are certified by ICAO according to the noise they produce and are classified separately for both take-off and landing noise levels. Please [click here](#) for further details on ICAO and noise certification.

From 23:00 to 07:00 is the “night period”, during which the noisiest types of aircraft may not be scheduled to land or take-off.



The ‘night quota period’ is from 23:30 to 06:00. Between these hours aircraft movements are restricted to an upper limit on the number of movements. Noise quotas are enforced as detailed above. The number of movements and quota counts allowed are set for each season. Please [click here](#) for full details of airport quota and movement regimes.

The summer season is the period of British Summer Time (BST) in any one year. The winter season is the period between the end of BST in one year and the start of BST in the next.

GAL proactively monitors and works with airlines to manage their compliance with all Government restrictions and has no authority to alter these restrictions. All reporting is published on our noise website and through GATCOM ([click here](#)) and NATMAG ([click here](#)).

Ground Noise

If you live very close to the airport you may hear noise from aircraft when they are on the ground. There are several causes of aircraft noise on the ground at all airports. The main factors are:

- Aircraft using reverse thrust to reduce their speed when they land
- Aircraft taxiing between the runway and the parking stands
- Aircraft parked on stands with their power units running
- Engine Testing

Ground noise is subject to strict controls and measures.

Reverse thrust

Reverse thrust is a way of slowing aircraft down once they have landed. It cannot be used whilst the aircraft is airborne. In certain circumstances, for example when the runway is wet, reverse thrust is used for safety reasons.

To reduce disturbance in areas close to Gatwick Airport, pilots are requested to avoid using reverse thrust between 23:00 and 06:00 local time unless required to for safety reasons.

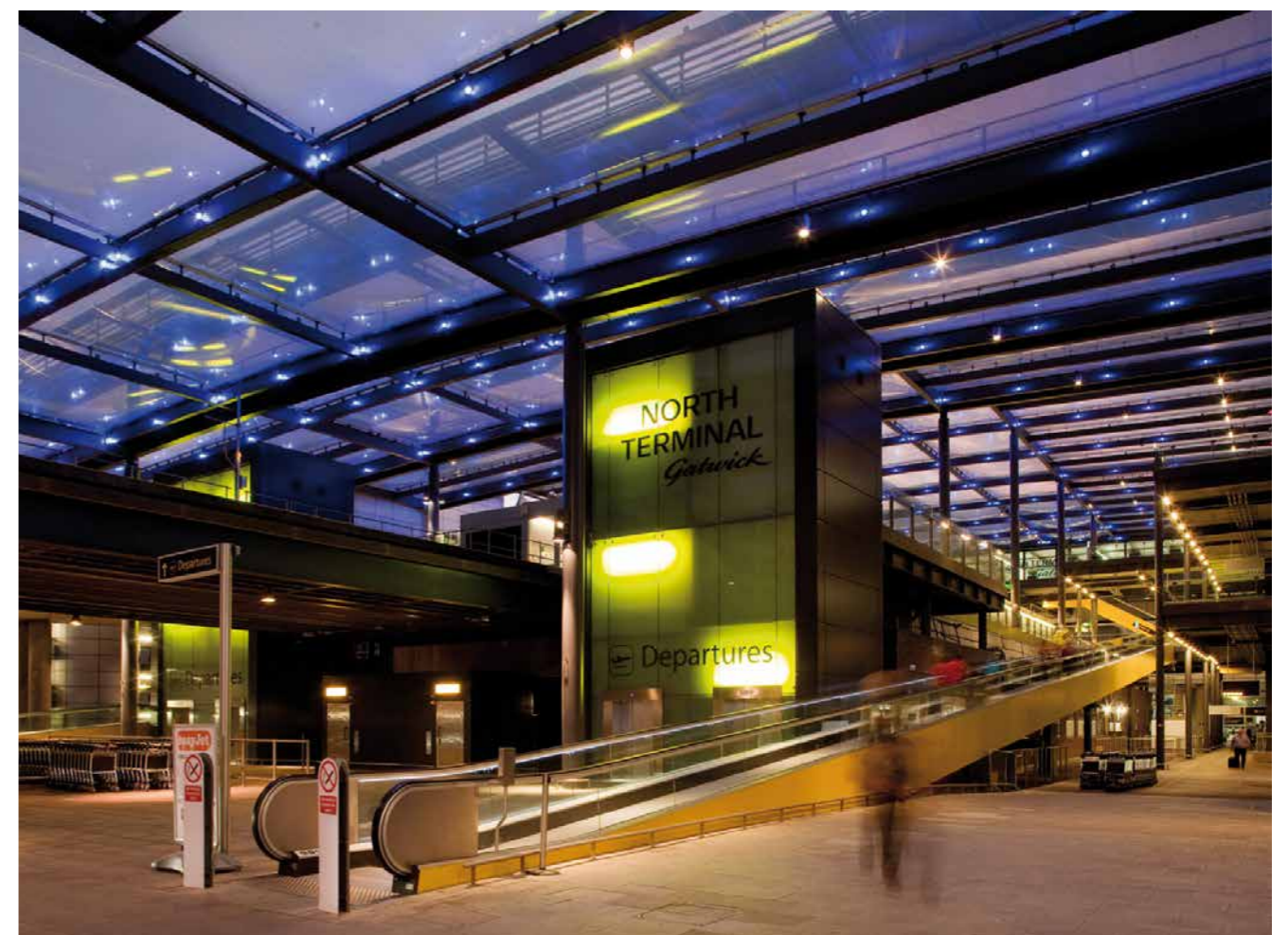
Perceptions of aircraft noise

Noise is not always an issue for everybody as people hear and react to noise differently at different times and in different places and circumstances. What is noticed by one person might not bother another.

This isn't just about one person's awareness and sensitivity compared to another's. For the same person, it can also seem different depending on the level of background noise such

as cars, lorries or the sounds of everyday life. It might sound different depending on the weather and what the person is doing at the time.

This is why the same plane, flying in the same direction, at the same height, over the same place, at the same time of day, can sound very different to you from one day to another. Disturbance from aircraft noise is a very personal matter and people's reactions vary.



What is Being Done to Reduce Aircraft Noise?

Noise Monitoring

NPRs are used to contain set routes aircraft must follow and so provide some certainty as to which areas will be over flown by departing aircraft. After take-off, aircraft are required to climb to at least 1,000ft above the airport level by 6.5km from when they begin moving on the runway. This encourages aircraft operators to gain height as quickly as possible and then reduce engine power and noise at the earliest opportunity.

The noise of an aircraft on departure is monitored at fixed monitors sites. Noise limits for take offs are set by the DfT and differ during the day (07:00 - 22:59 hours local), night (23:30 - 05:59 hours local) and 'shoulder periods' (06:00 - 06:59 and 23:00 - 23:29 hours local). It is at these monitor points, as shown on page 22, that fines are levied for aircraft that do not adhere to the defined noise limits.

More information about noise monitoring and how to request

or suggest a site for noise monitoring analysis can be found on our website [here](#).

Previous noise monitoring analysis can be found on the Gatwick Airport 'Noiselab' website, [here](#).



Noise from departing aircraft

It is important to note that aircraft noise limits are only set for departing aircraft and airlines at Gatwick invest heavily in modernising their fleets to operate quieter aircraft.

Departures are continually monitored and if an aircraft breaches the legal noise limits at the fixed sites, the airline is fined up to £1000. All proceeds from the noise fines are passed to the independently run Gatwick Airport Community Trust (GACT). The Trust also receives £194,000 (2015) per annum from the

Airport and distributes grants to local charities and community projects ([click here](#)).

Data from our current and historical noise monitors is publically available via the history section of our noise lab, [here](#). It is important to note that the data from the current mobile noise monitors in operation is manually downloaded every 7-10 days.

Noise Contours

Noise from planes operating on and near airports is monitored in accordance with government guidelines. This helps to verify

the trends in aircraft noise performance. In Britain, this noise is measured by averaging out noise levels during the day (a 16-hour day) during the summer period. The amount of noise is given in decibels.

DfT report on noise contours – available [here](#)

CAA noise information – available [here](#)

Graphic of noise monitor locations and NPRs



Important Notice

This information and the accompanying maps are for information and illustrative purposes only and must not be interpreted as advice as to whether or not a property in any given area should be purchased. In providing this information Gatwick Airport Ltd accepts no liability for any loss suffered by any person relying upon it.

The Secretary of State for Transport has taken direct responsibility for noise control at Gatwick under the Civil Aviation Act 1982. The Department for Transport (DfT) liaises closely with Gatwick Airport Ltd with respect to both the effects of airspace policy on areas around the airport and of emerging trends and issues in airspace management. Consideration and enactment of changes to airspace policy rests with the DfT.

Glossary

ATC	Air Traffic Control
ACOP	Arrivals Code of Practice
AIP	Aeronautical Information Publication
ANS	Air Navigation Solutions (Air Traffic provider for Gatwick Airport)
BST	British Summer Time
CAA	Civil Aviation Authority
Casper	Airport noise and flight tracking computer system
CDO	Continuous Descent Operations
DfT	Department for Transport
EU	European Union
FLOPSC	Flight Operations Performance and Safety Committee
FPT	Flight Performance Team
Ft	Feet
GATCOM	Gatwick Airport Consultative Committee
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organisation
ILS	Instrument Landing System
NATMAG	Noise and Track Monitoring Advisory Group
NATS	Formerly National Air Traffic Services
Nm	Nautical Mile
NMB	Noise Management Board
PRNAV	Precision Area Navigation
SID	Standard Instrument Departure
STAR	Standard Arrivals Route

Further Links and Contacts

Public and industry engagement

Gatwick Airport takes its responsibility to the local community very seriously and has a range of engagement groups to ensure that the public and their representatives have a voice in how airspace and noise are managed and controlled.

GATCOM Gatwick Airport Consultative Committee

The purpose of GATCOM is to advise the Airport's Chief Executive Officer and his management team about issues which concern the local communities, travellers, businesses and other users of the airport and to stimulate interest both within the airport community and local people. Seeking a balance between these wide and conflicting interests is a challenging role. Our primary objective is to ensure the future success of Gatwick providing high quality services to passengers and airlines, having particular regard to the impact this has on the surrounding communities and the environment.

GATCOM meets four times a year and considers issues in connection with the operation and development of Gatwick Airport and its effect on local communities, passengers, airlines and other users of the airport. GATCOM meetings are open to the public and their minutes are published [online](#).

NATMAG the Noise and Track Monitoring Advisory Group

NATMAG brings together representatives from the DfT, ANS, NATS, airlines, Gatwick Airport and local authorities. The group discusses a wide range of noise and track-keeping issues and monitors track-keeping performance, night engine testing and ground noise complaints.

NATMAG meetings are not open to the public, but minutes are published [online](#).

NMB Noise Management Board

Set up following the Independent Arrivals Review and on the recommendation of that review, the NMB's role is to develop, agree, oversee and maintain a co-ordinated noise management vision and subsequent strategies for Gatwick on behalf of stakeholder organisations. The main aim of this work is to reduce the impact of noise on the local community.

The NMB is made up of a wide range of industry experts and stakeholders including councils and community groups. There are 13 seats on the board. The NMB hosts one open meeting a year. Whilst the other meetings are closed, the minutes of those meetings are published online ([click here](#)).

FLOPSC Flight Operations Performance and Safety Committee

An industry meeting to monitor and encourage improved performance amongst airlines and other airport partners.