

Meeting on tackling aircraft noise across South East London

Kennington Park Community Centre, 8 Harleyford Street, SE11

26 September 2017

7.30-9pm

Opening the meeting

The Chair, Helen Anderson, welcomed everyone to the meeting, and stated its purpose in seeking to form a new group, HACAN South East, to campaign on aircraft noise from both LHR and LCY, and seek fair flight paths and respite from constant plane noise and night flights over SE London.

Dan Scorer from the PlaneHell group spoke about how activists from across South East London had come together under the PlaneHell banner, set up by Bridget Bell in Walworth, with the support of SouthwarkCAN, to form a group campaigning on noise across SE London, caused both by Heathrow and London City arrivals. Everyone had noted significant changes to flight paths and an increase on flights, without consultation on these changes.

John Stewart, Chairman, HACAN

John gave a history of HACAN (Heathrow Association for the Control of Aircraft Noise, and his involvement since 2000).

John set out the positive opportunities over the next few years that will bring change

We need the south east London voice to be strong

West London has always been the focus for aircraft noise

Now there is recognition that there is a problem in south east London

This recognition was not there previously

We need to be heard in the current big decisions that are going to be made

October/November- consultation coming out from Heathrow- never done this before- they will be asking us about the design principles to inform their new flight paths. Not where they should go, but the principles that should inform them.

We have to argue for multiple flight paths to allow for respite

John says most emails HACAN get complaining about aircraft noise now come from south east London.

In West London they switch runways at 3pm- south east London gets no to respite

Heathrow respite report - coming out shortly - before the flight paths consultation. It will address questions like how far apart should flight paths be?

Need to make our voices heard- Heathrow and the aviation industry are listening in a way they weren't listening 10 years ago

New flight paths will be developed over the next few years

Third runway comes with the condition of a 6.5hr night, with no night flights

HACAN will be calling for an 8 hour night and publishing a report on this.

Questions from the floor

Robin- Oval

Question about why City airport traffic is going over Oval. John explained that during easterly operations LCY operate a concentrated flight path that goes over Oval and loops back over the city.

David, Herne Hill

Asked about Ruskin Park helicopter flights, and Kings installing a helipad

Question about noise standards that planes are manufactured to: John- very few rules and regulations covering helicopters (GLA investigation was shocked about lack of regulation on safety and noise). There are maximum noise levels, but these are very high. There has been no significant step change in aircraft noise reduction.

Michael SW8- consultation- what can we do to guard against sham consultations by Heathrow and them manipulating the public?

John- we must invite Heathrow to come here during the consultation period and meet with us, as well as all responding online. Different parts of SE London so people can talk to them face to face

Resident of Claylands Road, since 1985, remembers flight path changes in 90s

We need to go back to the wider flight paths to before the changes in 1995, and be aware of the political opposition that we will get from rich areas like Westminster and Kensington.

John agrees that we need to look widely at flight paths and counter the pressure from wealthier areas north of the river.

Monitoring air pollution- cheap tubes can give an indication of air pollution levels, but expensive equipment is needed to get official measurements. Local authorities measure the air pollution, HACAN does noise.

Caroline Pigeon AM- London wide Assembly Member. Deputy Chair of transport committee, chair next year. Wants to be kept in touch. Opposed expansion of City airport. Highlights CAA lack of consultation and transparency- need to campaign for the government to improve this. Happy to table questions on getting the government and CAA to look at cumulative noise maps across London. This would help with the Heathrow consultation later in the year.

Caroline gets more correspondence on helicopters than she does planes. The mayor does not have any powers over this. Happy to support our work in any way she can- and raise the profile of the impact on south east London.

John- City airport noise contours are drawn up separately to Heathrow, even though we can hear both sets of noise. DfT are beginning to understand that as the flight paths move, they will need to change this.

Until recently the official noise contours excluded us in south east London. Last year the government published the sonar study on where people start to get affected by aircraft noise. It endorsed all that

campaigners have been saying for 20 years. The noise averages out at 51db, which takes us back into south east London.

DfT are about to publish revised airspace strategy, which will recognise noise in SE London. The CAA and DfT won't be able to ignore us any more, as we won't be outside the official contours any more.

Paul, Public Law Solicitor

Interested in bringing legal action- consultation is an area where there is guidance and case law on how they have to be managed, spread and perceived and data collected and acted on.

Ruth, Mottingham

London City is the issue- very invasive. The flights are coming in at a low level. A lot of noise- a screaming noise, maybe when they're trying to slow down.

A320s- the whining noise. John outlined the small fix to get rid of it- airlines said they are going to make fix by end of next year.

Amina (HACAN East) outlined the work that she's been doing. City Airport- the airport was built in 1987 and it has been a series of broken promises- said they'd only fly small jets. They're now expanding the runway and flying jets to America.

City Airport 30th birthday a month today- will be highlighting the links between the local and the global- the impact of the aircraft on the communities around the airport.

HACAN East came out of Fight for Flight in NE London, which unsuccessfully fought against the expansion of LCY.

HACAN East is self-funding and has its own committee- it's a sister organisation. John says that the same pattern could happen here. Need to set up a committee of people representing different areas. HACAN can provide some funding, and then we can think about more tactics.

Tracey Beresford, Camberwell, Southwark Green Party

Need to think about the wider environmental issues and that expansion of Heathrow will mean that we can't meet our Paris climate change obligations

Count the number of planes going over specific landmarks. 10 years ago, it was 40 planes an hour going over the Oval.

Rosemary, Dulwich, 50 years

Has been counting planes from 5.30pm- City Airport planes on easterly operations. Would like to be part of a counting operation on planes.

Bob, Sidcup

Tried to get neighbours involved- had no awareness of it, and they're at work during the day. Has written to James Brokenshire MP- just passes on responses

John- City Airport- after a year the airport had to produce a report for the CAA. The CAA asked for a report on the impact from the community- 400% increase in complaints. John met CAA two weeks ago- they will now be reporting by the end of this year. The CAA has a bad record in responding to community concerns- they got it very wrong in Gatwick. They rejected Edinburgh airport's proposals, which gives us hope that they are changing their approach.

Rachel, Camberwell- bought a decibel meter and found that noise was 85db

Camberwell- affected by the 4.30am flights- who is responsible for collecting data on noise and is this happening?

John- the airports have to produce a report on noise levels every year (noise action plan).

Where are decibel meters? Heathrow have 50 new noise meters, one of which is going to be in the Oval area quite soon.

Kai and Britta, Brockley, - have got a noise meter from Heathrow

HACAN SE could talk to Heathrow about getting more noise monitors across south east London.

Fosters architects are also developing noise monitors that will be accredited by South Bank University.

Next steps

Follow-up meeting- smaller meeting- a planning meeting, to put together a structure for HACAN SE and people join the committee. People contact Bridget, and we can have a follow-up meeting in the next couple of weeks, so we have a structure in place in time for the Heathrow consultation.