

Minutes of the meeting of the Gatwick Airport Consultative Committee (GATCOM) held on 16 July 2026

Present:	
Tom Crowley	Chair
Angie Hills	ABTA
Cllr Alan Jones	Burstow Parish Council
Fran Downton	Tourism SouthEast
Cllr Malcolm Fillmore	Rusper Parish Council
Cllr Nigel Emery	Horsham District Council
Cllr Ian Gibson	Mid Sussex District Council
Cllr Helyn Clack	Surrey County Council
Cllr Brian Quinn	West Sussex County Council
Brett North	Gatwick Diamond
Hugh McConnellogue	Airline Operators Committee
Ed Winter	Environmental Group representative
Stuart Pick	London Chamber of Commerce
Jonathan Drew	Noise Management Oversight Board Chair
Cllr Mike George	Horley Town Council
Cllr Nick Hilton	Crawley Borough Council
Samantha Williams	Passenger Advisory Group
Robin Clarke	NATS
Ben Davis	Unite

Also in attendance:	
Pierre-Hugues Schmit	Chief Executive Officer, GAL
Sam Fulton	Director of Communications and External Affairs, GAL
Andy Sinclair	Head Aerodrome Transformation, GAL
Conor Noon	Public Affairs Manager, GAL
Tim Norwood	Chief Planning Officer, GAL
Richard Lennard	Economic and Community Partnerships Manager, GAL
Julie Kapsalis	Principal and CEO of North East Surrey College
Monique Smart	GATCOM Secretariat
Graham Lake	GATCOM Technical Advisor

1. Apologies and Welcomes

1.1 Apologies were received from: Cllr Peter Osborne (Kent County Council), Cllr Richard Biggs (Reigate and Banstead Borough Council), Cllr Caroline Ward (West Sussex County Council), Cllr Peter Griffith (East Sussex County Council), Cllr Chris Phillips (Mid Sussex District Council), Ana Christie (Sussex Chamber of Commerce)

2. Minutes of The Last Meeting

2.1 Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of GATCOM held on 30 April 2026 be approved and signed by the Chair.

3. Membership and Appointments

3.1 The Secretariat introduced the previously circulated report (copies attached to the signed minutes) updating on membership and setting out for approval the appointments to be made to GATCOM's sub-groups and Vice Chair.

3.2 Resolved – That GATCOM:

- Note the changes in GATCOM membership.
- Agree the appointment of Helyn Clack as Vice Chair of GATCOM for 2026/27.
- Agree the membership of GATCOM Steering Group for 2026/27 including Surrey District Councils having 3 representatives for an additional year.
- Agree the Airlines and Travel/Tour Operators seats on PAG for 2026/27 as detailed in 3.5.
- Agree to waive the rule that a substantive and substitute member from the same Local Authority cannot be appointed to NaTMAG.
- Agree the appointment of Liz Lockwood to NaTMAG for a period of 1 year.
- Agree the GATCOM representatives to the Noise Management Board as detailed in 4.6.

4. Gatwick Region Airport Economic Zone (AEZ)

4.1 GATCOM welcomed Richard Lennard, Economic and Community Partnerships Manager, GAL, and Julie Kapsalis MBE, Principal and CEO of North East Surrey College of Technology. Richard and Julie are Co-Chairs of the Gatwick Airport Economic Zone Interim Strategic Advisory Board and provided GATCOM with an update and [presentation](#) about the AEZ.

4.2 Questions from members as a result of the presentation, and the responses given, included the following:

- Fran Downton stated that with the current environment she would encourage all GATCOM members to embrace and support this private/public partnership.
- Cllr Helyn Clack asked the Board to ensure awareness and promotion of the AEZ was being made to the new Local Authorities being established as a result of Local Government Reorganisation. Julie stated that key partners do include local authorities but also added that if there are any events that GATCOM members feel would be good to promote the AEZ then please contact Julie or Richard.
- Cllr Helyn Clack also asked how the AEZ can support young people and care leavers. Julie responded stating that the AEZ partners, as well as contractors and wider employers offer a significant opportunity in terms of employment for all. Julie acknowledged that there are other groups that have a more formal role to play around skills, skills is still a key part of the AEZ. Sam Fulton from GAL did add that GAL have several targeted programmes including those for harder to reach and disadvantaged groups and she would be happy to discuss this further with Helyn.
- Ian Gibson asked if the Interim Strategic Board was at a position where it can lobby, particularly in relation to Quantum AI. Richard stated that this was identified as an area of strength through the taskforce and highlighted that Quantum was identified as an opportunity to drive economic growth in the area. This has been showcased at the recent attendance of UKREiif and at the front of

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the Boards strategy to promote. Julie and Richard would be happy to discuss this up further with Ian outside of the meeting.

- Nick Hilton asked if the AEZ would be lobbying government on any infrastructure issues that may help economic development in the area. GAL added that as a major part of the national infrastructure, Gatwick does already liaise with government and local authorities and local businesses via many established routes. GAL offered to discuss further with Nick if he had any specific infrastructure issues he wished to highlight.

4.3 The Chair thanked Julie and Richard for taking the time to attend GATCOM and provide this presentation on such an important topic.

5. GATCOM Steering Group – Chairman’s Report

5.1 The Chair of GATCOM introduced his report (copies attached to the signed minutes) of the last Steering Group Meeting that took place on 25 June and highlighted the attached appendices containing the Annual Air Quality Report and a separate report on Ultrafine Particles.

5.2 Ed Winter expressed concern that the Steering Group report did not highlight the health effects and concern raised about the Ultrafine particle report. The Secretariat highlighted the recommendation in the report that GATCOM supports the work around this and will be reported directly to GATCOM on an annual basis and that when further data is available, GATCOM will also request an update from Sustainable Aviation.

5.3 Resolved – That GATCOM:

- Agree that GATCOM will continue to meet at the STEM centre with the Secretariat continuing conversations with GAL to improve facilities including audio/visual equipment.
- Note the Noise Exposure Contours for Gatwick Airport 2025.
- Save the date of 14 October to attend GALs Annual Airspace & Noise Public Forum.
- Note the Annual Air Quality Report 2025.
- Note the Ultrafine Particle Report and support Reigate and Banstead Councils in continuing this work with Defra funding and reporting to GATCOM annually.
- Note that Sustainable Aviation are also undertaking some work on Ultrafine Particles and seek to get an update from them when completed.

6. Passenger Advisory Group

6.1 The Chair of PAG, Samantha Williams, introduced the report (copies attached to the signed minutes) of the last PAG meeting and activities during the last quarter.

6.2 Samantha highlighted the engagement that PAG have had with GAL on Pier 6 and the Departure Lounge expansions and thanked GAL for the early engagement on such important passenger focused projects. Samantha also praised GAL for keeping PAG updated on incidents that happen at the airport and how this may affect passengers.

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6.3 Samantha also commented that PAG would soon again be meeting with GAL to discuss the latest Capital Investment Programme.

6.4 GATCOM noted the work of PAG and its engagement with GAL as the 'critical friend' and supports its role as advocate on behalf of passengers.

7. Chief Executive Officer's Report

7.1 GATCOM received a report from Pierre-Hugues Schmit, Chief Executive Officer, GAL on activity at the airport over the past quarter (copy attached to the signed minutes).

7.2 Pierre-Hugues asked Tim Norwood to provide an update on the Northern Runway Project and the Judicial Review process. Tim reminded GATCOM that the initial Judicial Review hearing in the High Court took place in January 2026 with 11 grounds of challenge by GACC and CAGNE. The information and evidence provided at that was then considered and on 23 June 2026 the judge dismissed all 11 grounds of challenge. In recent weeks both GACC and CAGNE have applied for permission to proceed to the Court of Appeal and last week the Court of Appeal Judge agreed to consider the 6 grounds put forward for further appeal. The hearing for that is expected to take place on 27, 28 and 29 July.

7.3 Other updates highlighted from the CEO report by Pierre-Hugues were:

- Gatwick is now in the peak summer period, and the priority is to deliver safe operation at the airport for everyone.
- For the 11th year in a row, GAL earned The Wildlife Trusts' Biodiversity Benchmark, a milestone that celebrates the ongoing dedication to the thriving habitats surrounding London Gatwick.
- Gatwick has received a special editorial recognition award from New Civil Engineer, for being the first airport in the world to gain PAS2080 certification which is an international standard for managing whole-life carbon across the built environment, focusing on net-zero.
- London Gatwick has acquired control of the World Cargo Centre, bringing one of the airport's most strategically important freight facilities fully into its operational estate. At Gatwick cargo flies in the hold of passenger aircraft.
- Discover London, a new retail offering, has opened. The store celebrates the best of British alongside local makers including Monty Bojangles and Bolney English Wines.
- New overnight train trials from London Victoria and Reading, delivered in partnership with GTR and GWR, have started and will improve access for early morning departures and late-night arrivals while promoting more sustainable travel choices.
- A new Eastbourne to Gatwick bus route has also been launched with metrobus.
- A number of new airlines have started at Gatwick including Pegasus Airlines daily service to Istanbul. Eurowings and Condor have introduced 19 weekly flights to Cologne and Stuttgart. Also, the launch of a double daily Air France service to Paris and the opening of Jet2's new base at Gatwick with 29 routes this summer.

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- Connectivity to China has also strengthened with Beijing Capital Airlines and Air China.
- Regarding sustainability GAL is halfway through the second Decade of Change. A roadshow took place to celebrate the successes with drop-in information session and as well as the launch of a new sustainability app.
- Chillers have responded well during the recent heatwaves. GAL is also progressing changes to its heating equipment to support its carbon commitments.
- In May, GAL confirmed a partnership with Kent Wildlife Trust and Somerset Wildlife Trust, facilitated by Wilder Carbon. This £1 million investment in nature will help transform degraded land into species habitats and play an important role in achieving GALs Net Zero 2030 commitment.
- Pierre-Hugues Schmit stated that the Gatwick Community Trust (GACT) has now been replaced by the new Gatwick Community Fund with a more targeted approach across the region.
- The London Gatwick Aviation Academy has supported 97 unemployed residents from Sussex, Surrey, and Croydon, to gain insight into careers within the aviation sector through airport visits, industry engagement, and training. Participants undertake an accredited programme leading to a Level 1 qualification, alongside a guaranteed interview with a Gatwick Airport campus partner. By the end of May 2026, 44 graduates had either secured employment or were awaiting start dates with campus partners.
- Gatwick also recently supported English Wine Week by promoting local producers in the airport.

7.4 Questions from members as a result of the CEO report, and the responses given, included the following:

- Alan Jones has been the GATCOM appointed trustee on GACT since 2017. Alan praised the work of GACT and thanked all the trustees for the hard work and dedication they had put into reviewing and awarding grants to local community groups.
- Helyn Clack added that she was also a trustee on GACT and mentioned the huge impact it has had on local organisations and charities. She asked if the funds will still be allocated to those in areas most affected by airport operations. She also asked for thanks for Jo Rettie as the Chair to be noted. The GATCOM Chair joined members in thanking GACT and agreed that he would write to the outgoing Chair to pass on GATCOMs thanks. GAL added that the new Community Fund is essentially only a change in administration. The same amount of money will be allocated inline with the S106 agreement. The fund would increase as passenger numbers increase. Full details were included in a recent press release and more detailed S106 information would be sent to Helyn for information.
- GAL were asked how the recent hot weather had impacted operations. They responded stating that there was an impact on staff working out in the airfield and additional measures had been put in place for them. Some areas of improvement have been identified and will be worked on. Surface Access has been affected, and GAL continue to work with partners to ensure issues are communicated to passengers.

8. Member's Questions

8.1 One member question was received in advance of the meeting. The question and the response are detailed below.

Question from Ben Davis (Unite the Union – South East)

Unite have been requesting conversations on health and safety issues around the campus through local reps and full-time officials. The MP for Crawley has also written to the CEO of GAL on the matter and there has been no response. What is the issue preventing GAL from holding constructive talks on these matters?

Response from Gatwick Airport Limited

"We received an enquiry from Peter Lamb MP's office and took the time to provide a considered response which was shared with the MP's office on 3rd June 2026. In our response we outlined the existing forums through which health and safety issues are currently raised, managed, and escalated. We also reaffirmed that health and safety is London Gatwick's top priority and highlighted recent activities delivered through the VINCI Health and Safety Week. We fed back that Unite's proposal for a new Northern Runway Trade Union Working Group is a request that will be reviewed as Northern Runway plans develop. While we are open to considering new groups where there is a clear benefit, we also need to avoid duplication of existing engagement structures. We have also offered to meet Peter Lamb MP with our HR Director to better understand Unite's ambitions and discuss future engagement."

8.2 As a supplementary Ben stated he would follow up with Peter Lamb MP's office but also asked if he could have further details about the existing engagement structures and health and safety forums. Sam Fulton from GAL agreed to follow up with Ben after the meeting about any specific issues.

9. Airspace Update

9.1 The Chair welcomed Andy Sinclair and congratulated him on his promotion and new role as Head of Aerodrome Transformation at GAL. Andy went on to provide the following updates in relation to airspace and noise.

Route 4 Airspace Change consultation.

9.2 Andy reminded GATCOM that Route 4 is one of nine departure flight procedures from Gatwick, and the consultation has been about the reintroduction of satellite-based navigation to Route 4. Andy explained that all the other main runway departure routes have satellite navigation. A 14-week consultation was launched on 20 January and closed on 28 April. The consultation is part of a 7-stage detailed process set out by the CAA. The consultation is stage 3 of the process and is now complete.

9.3 Over 1800 responses were received. The process now is to identify all the relevant issues raised and then categorise the feedback. A consultation response document will be produced and submitted to the CAA. This is on track for GAL to submit by the end of July. Implementation of change is planned to be end of 2027, but this is subject to change depending on the analysis of feedback.

Airspace Modernisation

9.4 All work in relation to Airspace Modernisation has been paused pending the established of the newly formed UK Airspace Design Service (UKADS) that will be responsible for deploying, developing, and maintaining all future airspace. GAL have met with UKADS to prepare for the handover of the design work already undertaken by GAL.

9.5 The CAA and DfT have consulted on changes to the air navigation directions and guidance and the CAP1616, which is the process for airspace change. No revised versions of these have yet been published but are expected imminently.

10. Noise Management Board

10.1 The Chair referred members to the NMB update report (copies attached to the signed minutes). Jonathan Drew, NMB Oversight Board Chair, introduced the report that summarised the work of the Noise Management Board since the last GATCOM meeting. Jonathan highlighted the following:

- Katie Baker has been appointed as the temporary NMB lead to provide interim cover pending the return of Rebecca Mian. Jonathan reassured GATCOM that Katie comes with deep expertise with noise and experience of the NMB.
- The Annual Airspace & Noise Forum is scheduled for 14 October, 3-6pm, and is open to the public, including all GATCOM members. Please do "Save the date" as this will be an important briefing for the local community. Further details will follow.
- Rolls Royce provided the Community Assembly with a briefing on the future of noise and engines and manufacturing. This really help community members understanding of what may be possible. The Oversight Board has requested to have a similar briefing later in the year.
- Regarding the ongoing dialogue that the NMB, GATCOM and GAL have had about promoting the Community Assembly has resulted in GAL, as sponsors of the NMB, publishing on social media (via X and Facebook) about the NMB Community Assembly. The GATCOM Secretariat has shared this with GATCOM members to encourage everyone to reshare and repost and that is still possible now. The posts were on the 30 June, and the links were additionally added to this MS Teams Meeting chat.

11. Noise and Track Monitoring Advisory Group (NATMAG)

11.1 Mike George, GATCOM's lead member for noise, introduced the report (copies attached to the signed minutes) that summarised the key messages and recommendations arising from recent NaTMAG meetings. Mike highlighted the following:

- Initial results from the new early morning arrivals holding policy were positive. NaTMAG will continue to monitor this, especially in respect to any increase in noise complaints, although early signs are not showing any increase.
- Engagement with Airbus has resulted in validated engine design to address the 'whale noise' of the A220. This is expected to be certified by late 2026/early 2027.

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- NaTMAG had discussed the definition of overflights of areas with specific geographic boundaries, such as Horley. These boundaries were set in the 1960s and due to expanding housing may not be the same as the boundaries of those areas today. It was agreed that it would not be practical to update operational boundaries, the wording used in official documentation could be reviewed and clarified.
- Following discussions and concerns raised by community members GAL have now amended the noise complaints form to include noise enquiries.

12. Date of Next Meeting of GATCOM and its Sub-Groups

12.1 GATCOM noted the next meetings of GATCOM, and its sub-groups as follows:

Passenger Advisory Group – Thursday 17 September 2026

GATCOM Steering Group - Thursday 1 October 2026

GATCOM – Thursday 22 October 2026 at 2.00pm. This meeting will be in person.

The meeting concluded at 4.00pm