



Gatwick Airport Consultative Committee

CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REVIEW 2025-26



FOREWORD



TOM CROWLEY
CHAIRMAN

WELCOME, to GATCOM's 2025/26 annual review.

I would like to thank all members of GATCOM and the Passenger Advisory Group (PAG) for their work during the year. Special thanks are due to Samantha Williams, PAG Chair and Claire Booth, the outgoing PAG Vice Chair, Helyn Clack, Vice Chair of GATCOM, Mike George, GATCOM's lead member for Noise, Monique Smart GATCOM's Secretary and Graham Lake our independent technical advisor.

At our Annual Meeting in July 2025 Cllr Helyn Clack (Surrey County Council) was reappointed as Vice Chair for a further year. We also welcomed a number of new members to the committee including Cllr Garry Wall (West Sussex County Council), Cllr Nigel Emery (Horsham District Council), Cllr Nick Hilton (Crawley Borough Council) and Cllr Bradley Nelson (Mole Valley District Council). In addition, PAG elected a new Vice Chair, Gareth Thomas.

In September 2025 we said goodbye to Stewart Wingate as Chief Executive of London Gatwick, a role he had fulfilled for 15 years. Stewart has been an outstanding CEO and has led his team at the airport through many trials and tribulations not least of which was the impact of the pandemic. He has also been a stalwart supporter of GATCOM and consistently demonstrated his belief in our role as a "critical friend" of the airport.

Stewart is now Managing Director of the UK Airports owned by Vinci and Global Infrastructure Partners. His role is to focus on the future development and strategic direction of London Gatwick, Edinburgh and Belfast International Airports.

In September we welcomed Pierre-Hugues Schmit as the new Chief Executive of London Gatwick. Pierre-Hugues was previously Chief Commercial and Operational Officer at Vinci and also a non-executive director on the London Gatwick Board. We look forward to working with Pierre-Hugues and continuing the positive relationship we have with Gatwick Airport.



Stewart Wingate



Pierre-Hugues Schmit

The significant news at Gatwick this year was on 21 September 2025, when the Secretary of State for Transport granted consent for Gatwick's Development Consent Order (DCO) to bring the Northern Runway into routine use. However, local campaign groups, CAGNE and GACC, applied for a Judicial Review of the decision. The High Court dismissed the challenge and on 4 August 2026 the Court of Appeal refused permission to appeal meaning that the DCO has cleared all legal and planning stages.

Tom Crowley
Chair, GATCOM

WHAT IS GATCOM?



GATCOM is the Airport Consultative Committee for London Gatwick. Under Section 35 of the Civil Aviation Act 1982 all UK airports must “provide adequate facilities for consultation with respect to any matter concerning the management or administration of the airport which affects the interests of users of the airport, local authorities and any other organisation representing the interests of persons concerned with the locality in which the airport is situated”.

GATCOM was established in 1956. Our current membership includes representatives of four county councils, six district and borough councils and four parish councils together with other members who represent environment groups, local business interests, the travel and aviation sectors and airport employees.

Changes to our local authority membership will take place over the next few years as Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution Programmes come into fruition and the impact of this on our membership is something we are currently reviewing.

Details of our current membership can be found on our [website](#).

Even though GATCOM is purely an advisory body, it exercises a considerable degree of influence. Its effectiveness depends entirely upon its powers of persuasion and on the goodwill of all those involved.

Our members are very much aware that the airport provides significant economic benefits on a local, regional, and national scale but they also recognise that these benefits can come at a cost to local people's quality of life and to the environment and that these impacts must be minimised and mitigated.

GATCOM acts as a “critical friend” to the airport, in accordance with the principles listed in the Department for Transport's [Guidelines for Airport Consultative Committees](#). We strive to be: Independent, Representative, Knowledgeable, Transparent, and Constructive.

We regularly consider strategic issues relating to the operation and development of London Gatwick. Wherever possible we aim to work through consensus or, where that is not possible, to agree on what needs to be addressed if a course of action is pursued by the airport.

We aim to:

- Foster communication and build understanding between the airport and its users, local authorities, and interest groups.
- Consider and comment upon the impacts of the airport's administration, operation, and development.

HOW WE OPERATE

GATCOM meets in public four times a year. We alternate between virtual and in-person meetings. These meetings are open for the public to attend and observe.

We also have a Steering Group that meets in private four times a year to consider emerging issues, review GATCOM's Work Plan and make recommendations to GATCOM. Its deliberations are captured in a report which forms part of the following GATCOM agenda.

The third key part of our structure is the Passenger Advisory Group (PAG) which is a diverse group of sixteen unpaid volunteers, drawn from all walks of life, who are appointed by GATCOM and Gatwick Airport Limited (GAL) after a recruitment process that is open to anyone living within a reasonable distance from the airport.

In addition, four other members of GATCOM serve on PAG. These are the GATCOM Chair and Vice Chair, an airline representative, and an ABTA representative.

PAG provides feedback to GAL and their partners, in relation to all aspects of the passenger experience whilst at the airport. PAG also looks at some ancillary aspects of the airport, such as surface access. PAG reports to GATCOM quarterly on its activities and recommendations. There is a more detail about PAG and the areas of work they have

Current operating structure

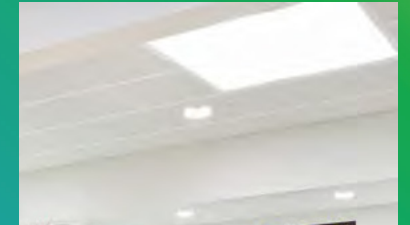
- GATCOM
- GATCOM Steering Group
- Passenger Advisory Group (PAG)
 - Terminal Reviews (twice yearly)
 - Input to airport projects (regular and adhoc working group meetings)

Related stakeholder groups

- Noise Management Board (NMB)
 - Oversight Board
 - Community Assembly
- Noise and Track Monitoring Advisory Group (NaTMAG)

Note: The Noise Management Board (NMB) and Noise and Track Monitoring Advisory Group (NaTMAG) work alongside GATCOM and provide separate stakeholder engagement and oversight functions.





GATCOM'S ACTIVITIES DURING 2025/26

Our agendas and minutes are published on our [website](#).

Key issues that GATCOM regularly address fall under the following headings:

- Noise
- Airspace Modernisation
- Airport growth and Sustainable Development
- Community and the Local Economy

Typically, our meetings cover a mix of information updates as well as consideration of policy and development matters. Each meeting considers a detailed report from GAL's Chief Executive, about current performance and significant issues at the airport. This generates questions and discussion and provides a valuable opportunity for GATCOM members to engage with Pierre-Hugues.

In addition, we have a standing agenda item that enables GATCOM members to give notice of questions they wish to raise, about any relevant matter, at the meeting. This encourages and enables members to become even more involved.

Questions this year have included:

- Our Unite member asked about a new partnership between Gatwick Airport and Uber and what assessment had been undertaken for the impact this would have on local employment and the sustainability of the local licensed taxi and private hire trade.

- A Parish Council member asked for clarification regarding a letter sent to local residents regarding Gatwick's Compulsory Acquisition powers in relation to the DCO Northern Runway project.

The full questions and answers received to member questions can be viewed in the minutes of each meeting [here](#).

Significant agenda items for GATCOM this year have included the following:

- Keeping up to date with London Gatwick's plan for growth and the Northern Runway Development Consent Order (DCO)
- Achieving Net Zero for Gatwick's Scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions by 2030
- Network Rail and Govia Thameslink Railway updates
- Airspace Change and Airspace Modernisation

Below is more detail about what was presented and debated on each of these subjects and also links to the GATCOM responses to consultations in relation to these subjects.



LONDON GATWICK'S PLANS FOR GROWTH



However, an application for a Judicial Review of the decision was submitted by local campaign groups CAGNE and GACC.

They sought to challenge the decision on a range of grounds relating to climate, noise, and economic impacts, the treatment of wastewater, and the interpretation of national aviation policy.

This application was accepted and heard in the High Court in January 2026. On 23 June 2026 the Court dismissed the challenge and on 4 August 2026 the Court of Appeal refused permission to appeal meaning that the DCO has cleared all legal and planning stages.

GATCOM has been kept updated and we have encouraged all our members to engage in the DCO process.

As reported previously GATCOM did submit a relevant representation and a closing statement as part of the planning process and will continue to seek updates from GAL on all aspects in relation to growth and expansion of the airport.

Whilst it has long been recognised that the nature of our committee, and the diverse composition of our membership, mean that it is not possible or appropriate for us to pass judgement on fundamental or controversial issues, such as the DCO application, we have played an important role in explaining the process to our members and in seeking and expressing common ground where possible.

On 21 September 2025, the Secretary of State for Transport granted consent for Gatwick's Development Consent Order (DCO) to bring the Northern Runway into routine use. Full details of what was agreed can be found on the Planning Inspectorate's **website**.

ACHIEVING NET ZERO



Following on from last year's updates on how Gatwick was progressing its Decade of Change sustainability targets, GATCOM received an update in July 2025 from Mark Edwards, Head of Sustainability and Steve Kelso, Head of Engineering, GAL, who provided a [presentation](#) on the progress of the delivery programme to achieve Net Zero for GAL scope 1 and 2 Green House Gas (GHG) emissions by 2030.

Scope 1 GHG reduction actions include replacing gas boilers with heat source air pumps and replacing petrol and diesel vehicles with electric, both of which GATCOM are pleased that GAL is on target to achieve.

The Decade of Change sustainability policy covers the period to 2030. The 2025 annual Decade of Change Performance Summary report can be found [here](#).



Network Rail and Rail Services

In July 2025 GATCOM also welcomed representatives from Network Rail and Govia Thameslink Railway.

The DCO for the Northern Runway includes a target of 54% of passengers arriving at the airport by public transport so GATCOM was keen to hear how partners could assist Gatwick with this.

At this meeting members questioned if the railways could meet the demand in passenger numbers that were expected in the coming years.

The response was that additional passengers help strengthen the case for rail investment to the DfT but in the shorter-term additional fleet, fare and timetable changes are planned to increase capacity.

Govia Thameslink Railway provided a [presentation](#) including information about performance, demand and growth.

Rail reform will involve bringing the rail companies into public ownership by the end of this parliament.

Great British Railways (GBR) will bring track and train together. Legislation to establish is currently progressing and GBR is expected to stand up sometime in 2027.



AIRSPACE CHANGE AND AIRSPACE MODERNISATION

Changes in the way airspace in the skies above and surrounding London Gatwick is something that feature regularly in GATCOM's work and reports. This year there were several consultations around Airspace Change and Airspace Modernisation that GATCOM have been kept up to date on and have provided responses to many.

In March 2025 the Government decided to reform the UK's approach to modernising the design of UK airspace by introducing a UK Airspace Design Service (UKADS). All Airspace Change Proposal work undertaken by Gatwick Airport was then put on hold at this stage to be later passed across to UKADS to take forward. This included proposals to modernise the arrival and departure routes to the south of the airport known as London Airspace South (LAS).

In November 2025 GATCOM welcomed Stuart Lindsay, Head of Airspace Modernisation at the CAA, who provided a presentation and overview of the consultation on proposed changes to the UK's airspace change process, CAP1616. A review of the process was needed to ensure it can enable UKADS to deliver airspace change efficiently and effectively. GATCOM's response to this consultation can be viewed [here](#).

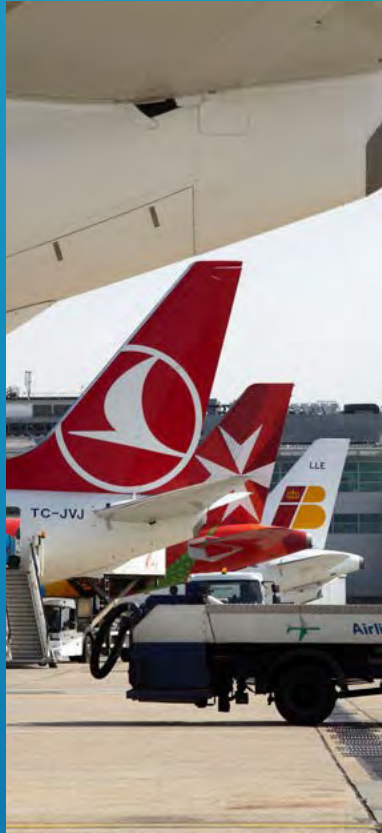
Following on from this, the DfT then launched a separate consultation on proposed changes to the Air Navigation Directions and Air Navigation Guidance. GATCOM's response to this consultation can be viewed [here](#) and included comments and concerns around proposed changes to altitude-based priorities, Noise Preferential Routes, the use of 3rd parties for consultations, airspace trials and compensation for people whose properties would be subject to new or more intensive flight paths.

In January 2026, Gatwick Airport launched a public consultation on options for the future operation of Route 4 which is one of nine departure routes for aircraft taking off from London Gatwick and which turns right to the north of the airport and then heads towards the east. Changes to the route have been under consideration for many years. The consultation has been about the reintroduction of satellite-based navigation to Route 4. All the other main runway departure routes have satellite navigation.

Andy Sinclair, Head of Airspace Noise and Airspace, GAL, attended GATCOM in February 2026 to explain what the consultation involved and to encourage GATCOM members and local residents to engage in the consultation.

The 14-week consultation ran until 28 April. Details can be viewed [here](#). GATCOM did submit a response to the consultation but due to the diverse views from those affected by the different options proposed, GATCOM could not support a particular option or have a view on how options should be prioritised. However, we did provide comment on the wider issue of Airspace Modernisation and also praised GAL for the excellent consultation process, information and events. The GATCOM response to the consultation can be found [here](#).





NOISE

NOISE MANAGEMENT BOARD (NMB)

In common with Heathrow and Stansted, London Gatwick Airport is designated under section 80 of the Civil Aviation Act 1982 for the purposes of the regulation of noise.

This gives the Secretary of State powers to direct aircraft operators using these airports, or the airport operators themselves, to adopt procedures which limit noise and vibration.

Gatwick Airport is committed to reducing noise at or around the airport and GATCOM plays a key part in ensuring this remains the case. We consider noise in a number of ways including input to the monitoring and review of the airport's statutory Noise Action Plan via the Noise and Track Monitoring Advisory Group, participation in the Noise Management Board and responding to government consultations. input to the monitoring and review of the airport's statutory Noise



The NMB was initially established in 2016 to meet the concerns of local communities about noise from aircraft arriving at the airport. There have been various reviews of the NMB and the current NMB is formed of three groups - the Oversight Board, Community Assembly and Programme Steering Group - each with a specific role to oversee a programme of work, the overall aim of which is to identify, evaluate, and promote the adoption of strategic and innovative ways of managing noise impact. More detail about the NMB can be found on [their website](#).

GATCOM works closely with the NMB. As well as myself as GATCOM Chair, our Independent Technical Advisor and our Lead Member for Noise all sit on the Oversight Board. The chair of the NMB is also a member of GATCOM and reports to the committee at each meeting.

One ongoing issue that GATCOM and the NMB, as well as other Airport Consultative Committees and our national liaison group, UKACCs, has raised with Government is the need to address the disconnect between land use planning and aviation noise.

In December 2025 myself and the NMB Chair wrote in response to a government consultation on home buying and selling to encourage policy change and guidance around this issue. The full response can be found [here](#).

The Community Assembly of the NMB is open to any community members local to London Gatwick. A dedicated Independent Community Representative chairs the Assembly and represents the community members at the Oversight Board. Members of the Community Assembly can also attend the Oversight Board and register to speak.

GATCOM would encourage any individual with an interest in noise around Gatwick, whether they are part of a community group or not, to consider joining the Community Assembly. Details of how to join can be found on the [website](#).

The annual Noise Management Board report for 2025, providing an overview of activities and progress to date can be found [here](#).

Annual Noise Management Board Report 2025



NOISE

Noise and Track Monitoring Advisory Group (NaTMAG)

NaTMAG brings together representatives from GAL, the Department for Transport, NATS (Air Traffic Control), airlines and local authorities to discuss a wide range of noise and track keeping issues at the airport.

GATCOM appoints seven members to NaTMAG and the Lead member for Noise provides regular reports back to GATCOM.

The Environmental Noise (England) Regulations 2006 require airport operators to develop noise action plans designed to manage noise and effects arising from aircraft departing from and arriving at their airport, including reduction if necessary.

The guidance states that the airport operator will present its action plan to the airport consultative committee for comment and review.

NaTMAG provides this function on behalf of GATCOM, and they regularly review the Noise Action Plan (NAP) for Gatwick Airport.

The progress made by GAL in delivering the actions contained in the NAP is reported quarterly to NaTMAG and annually to GATCOM. The revised plan for the period 2024-2028 can be found [here](#).

NaTMAG also monitors track keeping performance, continuous descent operations, night engine testing and ground noise and noise complaints. The group meets quarterly, and the minutes of the meetings and reports are available on the [GAL website](#).



THE PASSENGER PERSPECTIVE



The Passenger Advisory Group (PAG) continues to work closely and constructively with GAL. As part of the Commitments Framework the CAA gave PAG a formal role in the airport's consultation processes to input the passengers' perspective in the development of the airport's Capital Investment Plan. PAG therefore has an input in the direction and priority of major projects and reports its contributions to this process at the quarterly meetings of GATCOM.

PAG also continues to be consulted on a range of important projects such as the refurbishments and the expansion plans for the Terminal buildings. We were delighted to be involved at an early stage on both and make representations on behalf of the passenger. Below are photos of PAG on a recent visit to see the progress of the new extension to Pier 6.

There are currently eight subgroups of PAG, and they meet regularly to critically examine all elements of the passenger journey from surface access to retail, food, and beverage, assisted travel to customer services, car parking to security and UK Border Force. The groups highlight any concerns and make recommendations to GAL as a result of PAGs observations. They also undertake regular Terminal Review Visits and behind the scenes tours to gain a better understanding of the workings of the airport. This year they have also taken part in a number of mystery shopper projects and reported back findings directly to GAL to aid improvement. PAG members also regularly attend forums and meetings such as the Gatwick Transport Forum and The Independent Gatwick Accessibility Panel (IGAP).

PAG's work relies heavily on the engagement of GAL and the dedication of all the group's members who are volunteers. There is a considerable time commitment to the role of a PAG volunteers which as always deserves recognition, and I thank all the volunteers for the time and effort they give to the role.



REVIEWING AND IMPROVING THE WAY WE WORK

In November 2025 we held our fifth GATCOM awayday which all GATCOM members, substitute members, support officers and senior GAL staff are invited to attend. As always it was a productive session, and the outcomes were reported back to the subsequent Steering Group and GATCOM meeting.

At the awayday we reviewed the UKACCs practical guide, current meeting arrangements for GATCOM, discussed how the upcoming Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution programmes will affect GATCOM membership and also discussed how we could help promote the Noise Management Board Community Assembly and the good work they do.

A report from the away day was taken to the following GATCOM meeting in February 2026 and the following was agreed with updates on how we have taken these issues forward:

- We agreed that the current arrangements of alternating between in person and virtual meetings remain in place for both GATCOM and the GATCOM Steering Group.
- We agreed to keep appraised of Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation and review any changes to GATCOM membership as needed. Discussions will continue to take place this year before any decisions on membership are made ahead of the first changes in May 2027.

- We agreed that the STEM Centre be used as the venue for a future GATCOM meeting. For many years GATCOM meetings have been held in hotels at the airport with a formal 'committee style' layout. Although the hotels offer an excellent service, members suggested a more informal set up may allow members to feel more comfortable contributing to discussions as well as less daunting for the public who attend to observe. The STEM Centre is a large facility at the airport used for educational purposes when schools visit the airport. GAL have also held a number of public events, such as the Annual Public Noise Meeting, at the STEM Centre. I am pleased to report that we did hold the April 2026 GATCOM meeting at the STEM Centre and we are currently reviewing the feedback received and working with GAL to improve some aspects before the next in person meeting later in 2026.
- We asked GAL to promote the Community Assembly of the Noise Management Board via their official social media channels. I am pleased to report this has been taken forward and we hope that it reaches local residents who may have an interest in noise and want to join the Community Assembly.
- We asked the NMB to consider publishing a factsheet about how to make a noise complaint. Following further discussions and comments from community members it was agreed that updating the website wording and form for noise complaints and enquiries was sufficient and this has now been actioned.
- We also reviewed the GATCOM Work Programme for 2026, which was subsequently agreed by GATCOM in February 2026 and can be viewed [here](#).

GATCOM Annual Tour

In November 2025, GATCOM Members were invited to a tour of the STEM Centre at Gatwick Airport. This started with a welcome from Pierre-Hugues Schmit, Gatwick's new CEO. We were then provided with a briefing on education activities at London Gatwick including hearing directly from two of Gatwick Airport's current Apprentices. We also had an opportunity take part in one of the activities that Gatwick run when local schools visit.





UKACCs - OUR NATIONAL BODY



UKACCs is our national body and that brings together Airport Consultative Committees (ACCs) from the UK's largest airports to discuss matters of common interest and to share best practice and concerns.

In November 2025, the Secretariat and I attended the UKACCs annual meeting, hosted by Bristol Airport. The meeting was attended by Chairs and Secretaries from fifteen ACCs from across the UK and was a good opportunity to share information and best practise as well as receive updates from UKACCs and representatives from the DfT and CAA.

At the Annual Meeting, UKACCs launched its "Practical Guide for Airport Consultative Committees – Sharing Practice, Ideas and Experience".

This new Guide complements the Department for Transport Guidelines and provides practical examples and ideas aimed at facilitating effective and constructive meetings, promoting transparency and inclusiveness within ACCs. The Guide explicitly states that there is no "one size fits all" solution for ACCs and that it should not be interpreted as prescriptive requirements or official guidance. Instead, it serves as a collection of advisory concepts and illustrative examples. Click [here](#) to see the new guide.

LOOKING AHEAD

We will continue to deal with many of the same issues either because they have a long gestation period or are cyclical in nature. The emphasis and relative priority attached to these matters will shift from time to time and other environmental, economic, social, and political factors might bring new challenges for GATCOM.

Our attention over the coming year will likely be focused on the development of the Northern Runway programme now that the DCO has cleared all legal and planning stages.

GATCOM will need to consider the consequences of that decision and GAL will need to keep members updated.

A number of Government noise research reports have recently been published, with more expected later this year and these will have to be reviewed and reflected upon. We are also expecting a reviewed Airports National Policy Statement to be published that we hope that can move forward Airspace Modernisation and the work of the newly formed UK Airspace Design Service (UKADS).

In addition, PAG will also continue its work to monitor the passenger perspective through its working groups. This is ever more important as the airport plans to grow and expand.

Thank you for taking the time to read our annual report. Please let me know if you have any comments or questions by emailing secretary@gatcom.org.uk



The GATCOM logo is displayed in the top left corner. It features the word "GATCOM" in a bold, sans-serif font, with a stylized swoosh underline that starts under the 'G' and ends under the 'M'.The background of the entire page is a photograph of an airport scene. In the center, a British Airways aircraft is in flight against a cloudy sky with a bright sun. On the right side, the nose and cockpit area of a large aircraft are visible in the foreground. In the bottom left, the tail of another aircraft is partially visible.

GATCOM

MORE INFORMATION

GATCOM has 26 appointed representatives from a wide range of interests including local authorities, community and environmental groups, civil aviation, passengers, businesses, tourism and airport employees. Representatives from the Department for Transport, NATS, and Gatwick's Air Traffic Control are also present at the main Committee meetings when needed, together with Gatwick Airport Limited's Chief Executive Officer and his senior management team.

GATCOM meets four times a year and considers issues and questions in connection with the operation and development of

Gatwick and its effect on local communities, passengers, airlines and other users of the airport.

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