

July Elections 2024



Make Gatwick Airport an Election Issue

Manifesto proposal for all political parties

– Give the planet a chance and residents security that their homes and wellbeing will not be needlessly blighted to appease one company – Gatwick Airport

In the interests of residents' health and the climate emergency we all face, we offer all political parties the following for consideration as they progress their manifestos for the General Election this year –

In short – Place a ban on airport expansion for at least ten years, until aviation becomes fully decarbonised, to –

- Provide employment security.
- Significantly and instantly reduce global warming.
- Give aviation the opportunity to prove it can decarbonise and that the technology is sustainable.
- Reduce the decline in air quality by this sector, caused by the production of ultra-fine particles.
- Encourage self-financed airfield infrastructure to deal with alternative greener fuels.
- Put in place truly sustainable ground transport infrastructure to access the airport.
- Give residents 8 hours of undisturbed sleep.
- Change the law to allow aviation to be sued, similar to when other transport infrastructure expands and impacts homes. Air traffic movements already have a huge impact on homes and lives, which will be made even worse with the government's FASIS program.
- Change policy so that the Civil Aviation Authority cannot play judge and jury on aviation decisions; give residents equal rights when it comes to airspace changes – through CAP1616, they cannot currently challenge decisions without a costly Judicial Review.

In detail – Enforce a ban on airport expansion for at least ten years, allowing aviation to transition to decarbonised operations, providing many benefits and prompting further improvements –

- Give the aviation sector employment security – current unchecked growth of the industry poses a threat to job security. If we blow our global carbon budget for a safe level of global warming within the next decade, as projected, then we may have to stop flying completely and jobs will inevitably decline.

A just transition for aviation has the potential to bring about a revolution in how we travel, that will not only make flying fit-for-the-future, but could also increase employment per passenger.

- Inform the consumer of the emissions released by flying in all media messages, as well as at time of booking a flight.
- Allocate a carbon budget for the whole UK aviation sector, that should be shared between airports/airlines so that the total budget is not exceeded. Each airport must be responsible for their own carbon footprint at the airport and on the airfield, including arriving and departing aircraft. The totality of emissions from all airports must be examined as a whole and not as separate targets, as currently is the case.
- As the use of fossil jet fuel decreases year-on-year (as predicted by aviation), infrastructure to deal with fossil fuels will become redundant. Time must be allowed for ground crew training and replacement infrastructure to be installed, to pipe SAF and hold hydrogen. Switching airport infrastructure requires time and investment, so a delay of 10 years without growth would assist this transition.

For Health and Wellbeing -

- A period without growth will give residents security and remove the constant threat to their wellbeing and local environment. This will also enable local authorities to realise long-term plans for housebuilding, with associated infrastructure and amenities.
- We would also ask for your party to consider a ban (curfew of 8 hours) on all leisure flights at night, due to the extensive medical research that confirms the detrimental impact that night flight noise has on the health of residents.
- Introduce a frequent flyer levy to impact those who fly a lot whilst allowing occasional flyers to benefit from flying. This would reflect the current effects of flying on the planet, so the consumer is aware of the issue and is encouraged to consider greener forms of transport.
- Make aviation responsible for the decline in air quality caused by the production of ultra-fine particles and NOx from this sector; the Environment Act does not cover this sufficiently. At present, aviation only monitors air quality, with no consequent penalty or action. Decline in air quality must be curtailed, it cannot be mitigated, and more research must be undertaken.
- Make airports financially responsible for their burden on public transport infrastructure and highways maintenance costs.
- Increase poor wages for the majority who work at airports undertaking low-skilled work. Also, subsidise affordable housing local to the airport, to help “walk and cycle to work” initiatives.