

THE LONDON HELIPORT CONSULTATIVE GROUP

Agenda for the meeting to be held on Monday, 8th June 2015 at 7.00 p.m. at The Town Hall (Room 145), Wandsworth High Street, SW18 2PU

MEMBERS

Chairman

Councillor Larry Culhane – London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham (North End Ward)

Users' representatives

Capt Ian Field
Capt Michael Hampton
Capt Robin Renton
Capt Paul Watts

Residents' representatives

Wandsworth
Mr David Brown
Mr Geoff Brindle

Hammersmith and Fulham
Ms Christina Smyth

Kensington and Chelsea
Ms Eryl Humphrey-Jones

Local Authority Representatives

Hammersmith and Fulham
Councillor Larry Culhane (North End Ward)

Kensington and Chelsea
Councillor Maighread Condon-Simmonds (Chelsea Riverside Ward)

Wandsworth
Councillor Wendy Speck (Latchmere Ward)
Councillor Rosemary Torrington (Thamesfield Ward)

Refreshments

Sandwich refreshments will be available for members of the Consultative Group in the Committee Room (Room 145), prior to the meeting.

Contact:

Martin Newton (Secretary to the Consultative Group),
Administration Department, Wandsworth Borough Council, The Town Hall, London SW18
2PU Tel: 020 8871 6488 Email: mnewton@wandsworth.gov.uk

2nd June 2015

AGENDA

1. **Minutes - 17th November 2014** **(Pages 7 - 10)**

The Consultative Group are asked to confirm that they approve the draft minutes of the last meeting held on 17th November 2014 (Attached – Paper A).

The draft minutes were circulated to all members of the Consultative Group and to all on the circulation list for Consultative Group papers, and have been published on the Council's website.

Upon approval, the minutes will be signed by the Chairman as a correct record of the meeting.

The Chairman will then invite members to raise any matters arising from the minutes.

2. **Chairman and Membership of the LHCG**

The LHCG are asked to note that, in line with the previously approved arrangements for chairmanship of the Group's meetings, the Chairman for the meetings to be held during the 2015/16 municipal year will be Councillor Culhane (London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham).

The LHCG are also asked to note that (i) London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham has now appointed Ms Christina Smyth to fill its vacancy for a resident representative and that (ii) following consultation with riverside residents' organisations in the London Borough of Wandsworth, Mr Geoff Brindle has now been appointed to fill the resident representative vacancy left by the resignation of Seth Stiles.

3. **Monitoring of Helicopter Noise Levels**

Colin Stanbury will update the Group on the latest position regarding monitoring of helicopter noise levels.

4. **Information on Helicopter Movements** **(Pages 11 - 14)**

Summary information on helicopter movements at the London Heliport in Quarter 4 of 2014, and Quarter 1 of 2015, provided by the Heliport Manager, Simon Hutchins, is included herewith for information. (Attached - Papers B and C).

5. **Noise Complaints**

(Pages 15 - 20)

Information on noise complaints received by the London Heliport in Quarter 4 of 2014 and Quarter 1 and April of 2015 and on the action taken in response by the Heliport, provided by Simon Hutchins, is included herewith for information. (Attached – Papers D, E and F).

6. **Helicopter Noise and Disturbance - Norland (Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea)**

(Pages 21 - 22)

To consider and comment on concerns raised by residents of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea regarding helicopter noise and disturbance in the Norland area of that Borough. (Attached – Paper G)

The London Heliport comments that in the vicinity of Norland Road in Shepherd's Bush there is a long-established track for helicopters (twin-engine only since single-engine aircraft are restricted to the designated "H" heli-routes) which runs in a north westerly direction from the heliport toward the Brent Reservoir/ Hendon flyover/ southern end of the M1 motorway area. Aircraft using this route are unable to stray to the west of this line due to an airspace restriction up to 1400ft over a triangular area roughly defined by Hyde Park, Regents Park and Vauxhall which covers the Embassy and Royal Palace districts of Central London. Aircraft using this route are also unable to vary their track toward the west at the permitted flight levels due to the overhead restriction of aircraft descending toward the west over London into Heathrow Airport.

Aircraft operating along this route fly according to defined altitudes and clearance heights which are monitored by London Area low-level radar controllers in order to comply with London Airspace rules and this is strictly monitored to ensure that aircraft do not fly too high or too low.

Most of the helicopters operating along this route will have either departed from or will be bound for the London Heliport, though it is occasionally used for aircraft routing north to south (and vice versa) over London.

This is an important route to and from the north and is used by around 30% of air traffic using the London Heliport.

This matter has previously been discussed a few years ago at length at the LHCG in relation to a complainant resident further north along this route in the North Kensington area.

With the recent airspace classification change last year aircraft are now permitted, once transferred from London Heliport to London Area radar control when flying north along this route, to climb to a greater altitude (300ft higher) up to 1300ft than was the case until October 2014 so this should have an alleviating effect on the noise experienced on the ground, that is unless low cloud forces the aircraft to fly lower to remain in sight of the ground (down to a permitted minimum safe height of course which is monitored by low-level radar controllers).

7. **Altura Tower**

To consider and discuss further comments put forward from a resident of Altura Tower, adjacent to the heliport site.

Dear Mr Newton,

With reference to previous communication, I will like to bring to your attention certain issues, albeit some recurrent.

You must be aware of the appalling air pollution incidents over London, as well as Wandsworth, that have been widely reported in the National and local press. The Evening Standard, of today's date, had an article commenting on Londoners demanding the Tory and Labour Party leaders to do more to tackle the air pollution blighting the city. With Summer approaching, and with more people having their windows open, the environmental (air and noise) pollution will become worse. We fail to see why Wandsworth is taking a less strict approach to the "polluters".

Although we understand that London Heliport is allowed to use its facilities for refuelling, there are certain helicopters the exhaust gases of which are seriously damaging the environment. Of course we are referring to the red Air Ambulance Helicopter (G-EHMS), which seems to be the only helicopter polluting the environment during refuelling and landing/taking off operations. We cannot accept the Committee's comments that engine exhaust pollution applies equally to all helicopters. G-EHMS is consistently the only craft breaking all barriers. If it has to use the refuelling facilities it should be landing as far away as possible from the residential blocks. If other helicopters can be refuelled at the landing platform (H), we fail to understand why this particular helicopter should be "parked" directly under Altura Tower.

We also totally disagree with the London Heliport comments that they try to balance operations between the residential blocks. This is not so. As you can see from the attached photo there are mainly two landing areas, marked 1 and 2/4. No. 1 (bottom left in the photo) is directly underneath Altura Tower, while No. 2/4 is in the centre of the landing area. No. 3 is only used for short term waiting if not at all. However, the residential block on the far (east) side of the Heliport, i.e. Falcon Wharf (at 34 Lombard Road), is located further away from the Heliport as the Jewson Builders Merchants warehouse/depot of is situated between Falcon Wharf and Heliport.

If pollution effects (air and noise) should be mitigated, then landing area No. 4 should always be utilised thus offering a “balanced pollution effect” towards the two residential blocks.

Additionally, and what is more worrying at present, is that we see London Heliport being used as a practice landing field for United States Military Helicopters (see attached photo). A crew of 10 -12 was involved. This is not a military airport and these operations (landing/taking off/hovering) should not be permitted. We wonder if the public is aware of these operations and the danger these activities incur.

Although we understand that London Heliport’s lease allows emergency operations, like ambulance, police etc., even RA and RN, we cannot accept that American Forces practising within London residential areas comes under this “emergency operations” agreement. What next? Nato landing practices?





8. **Any Other Business**

The Chairman will ask members of the Consultative Group whether there are any other matters they wish to raise.

9. **Date of Next Meeting**

The Consultative Group are asked to determine the date of their next meeting.

THE LONDON HELIPORT CONSULTATIVE GROUP

Minutes of the meeting of The London Heliport Consultative Group held at the Town Hall, Wandsworth, SW18 2PU on Monday, 17th November 2014 at 7 p.m.

PRESENT

Residents' representatives

Mr David Brown

Local Authority representatives

Councillor Condon-Simmonds (In the chair)
Councillor Torrington

Users' representatives

Capt Michael Hampton

Observers, advisers and officers

Mr Simon Hutchins (The London Heliport)
Mr Colin Stanbury (Wandsworth Borough Council)
Mr Martin Newton (Wandsworth Borough Council)
Mr Stephen Taylor (GLA)

Apologies

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Culhane and Speck, Capts. Field, Renton and Watts and Ms Humphrey Jones,

Membership of the Group

The Chairman welcomed David Brown to his first meeting.

The Secretary informed members that Seth Stiles had stood down from the Group with immediate effect and that a replacement resident representative from Wandsworth would be sought. He confirmed that it was likely that the replacement representative from Hammersmith and Fulham would be in place for the next meeting.

Minutes - 7th July 2014

On item 1, the minutes of the meeting held on 7th July 2014 were confirmed and signed as correct, subject to amendments to item 5 to substitute the words "rotors" and "emissions" for "rotas" and "omissions" accordingly.

The minutes were thereupon signed by the Chairman.

Under matters arising, the Secretary referred to further comments submitted by the resident of Altura Towers again raising concern at engine / rotor noise, ground crew talking to pilots through open aircraft doors whilst engines were running, and environmental pollution caused by exhaust fumes including that caused by the red air ambulance helicopter.

Discussion ensued and Simon Hutchins confirmed that any communications between ground crew and pilots would not be 'idle chat' and would be to establish for instance the aircraft's fuel requirements – it was noted that the air ambulance visits to the heliport facilities were always likely to be of a short duration, to enable speedy essential refuelling before the helicopter was deployed on its next emergency flight, and that the running of rotors in this instance was a necessary event to ensure a quick and safe departure.

The Secretary undertook to communicate these comments to the resident and to again invite the resident to visit the heliport facilities at a convenient time. It was also noted that a further visit to the heliport for new members of the Group would be arranged when the current vacancies for resident representatives were filled.

Monitoring of Helicopter Noise Levels

On item 2, Colin Stanbury told members that Dr Stephen Dance had confirmed that the noise monitoring work previously offered by South Bank University was still on offer to the Group. Simon Hutchins informed the Group that arrangements could now be confirmed with the Heliport and Colin Stanbury undertook to again contact Dr Dance with a view to finalising the arrangements for the monitoring.

Information on Helicopter Movements

On item 3, the Group had before them the information on helicopter movements in quarters 2 and 3 of 2014.

Simon Hutchins confirmed that movement levels were up on the equivalent quarters in 2013.

The figures were duly received by the Group.

Noise Complaints

On item 4, the Group had before them the information on noise complaints in quarters 2 and 3 of 2014.

Discussion commenced and Simon Hutchins referred to the complaint dated 16th May from a resident in Sutton who had also made previous complaints to the heliport. Simon Hutchins said that a reclassification of airspace since September should have assisted in reducing the problem experienced by this resident who lives on rising ground. The aircrew of the aircraft the subject of the complaint had been notified of the concerns raised. In response to a question from Councillor Torrington, regarding differences in aircraft and related noise, Simon Hutchins said that this was often a matter of perception, with engine tone changing, and that wind direction was

another factor. He confirmed that the aircraft in question was not a sightseeing helicopter service.

During further debate, Simon Hutchins also drew attention to the complaints dated 11 June relating to a large Military of Defence helicopter. He confirmed that the manoeuvre the subject of the first complaint had been made out of sight of the heliport and that the second noise related complaint centered on the aircraft's inability to completely cease all engines on arrival, meaning it departed again and circuted the area until the late arriving passengers were ready to board at the heliport, following which it landed again.

In response to a question from Councillor Torrington, he confirmed that it was several years since a similar sized helicopter had used the heliport and that the problems with engine shut down were not know by the heliport prior to the aircraft's arrival.

St. George's Hospital Helipad

On item 5, Simon Hutchins confirmed that the air ambulance using the heliport the most was the Kent, Surrey and Sussex aircraft.

He told the Group that the air traffic control for the St. George's Hospital helipad is co-ordinated by the heliport as was the use of the heliport by aircraft using that helipad occasionally for refuelling purposes. It was noted that the destination of patients carried by the air ambulances related to the particular kind of care required.

Any Other Business

On item 6 no further items of business were raised.

Date of Next Meeting

On item 7, the Group agreed to meet again on Monday, 8th June 2015.

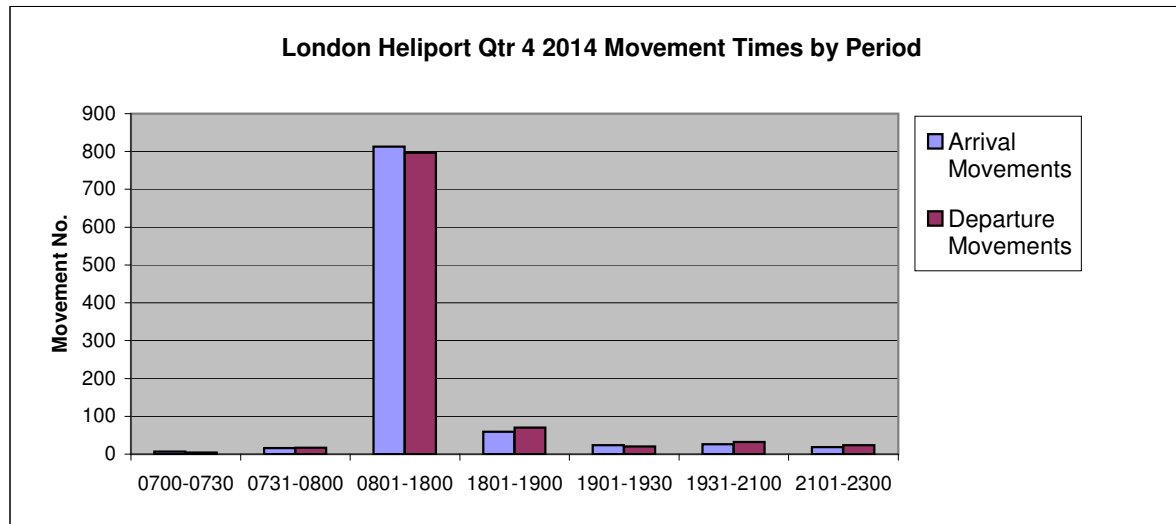
The meeting ended at 7.18 p.m.

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Qtr 4 2014 Movement Time Breakdown

Time Band	Arrival Movements	Departure Movements	Total
0700-0730	7	4	11
0731-0800	16	17	33
0801-1800	813	797	1610
1801-1900	59	70	129
1901-1930	24	20	44
1931-2100	26	32	58
2101-2300	19	24	43
Total	964	964	1928

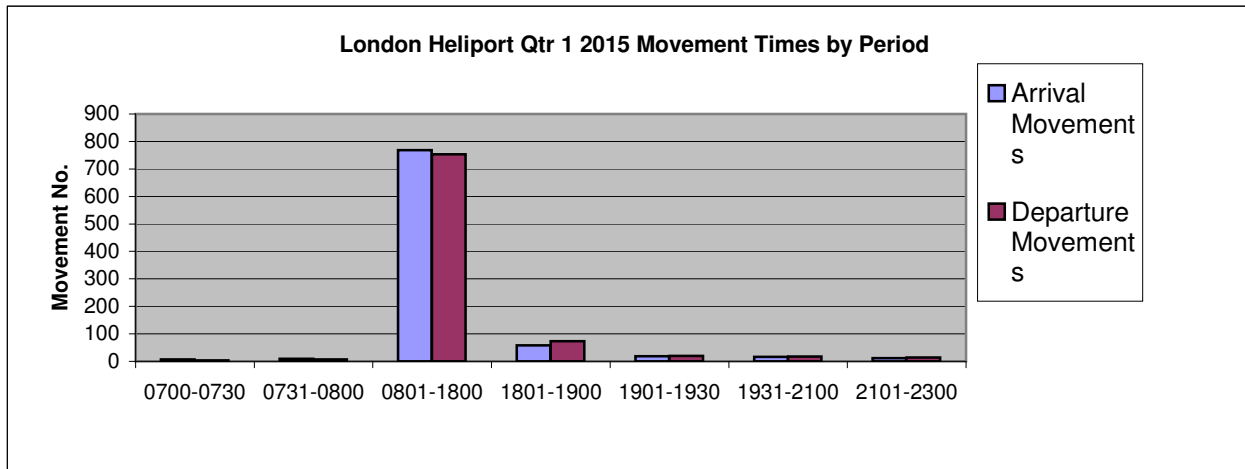


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C

Qtr 1 2015 Movement Time Band Breakdown

Time Band	Arrival Movements	Departure Movements	Total
0700-0730	7	4	11
0731-0800	9	7	16
0801-1800	769	753	1522
1801-1900	58	73	131
1901-1930	19	20	39
1931-2100	16	18	34
2101-2300	12	14	26
Total	890	889	1779



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NOISE COMPLAINTS SUMMARY Oct – Dec 2014

Complaint Reference	Date of Complaint	Time of Occurrence	Time of Complaint	Brief Details of Complaint	Brief Details of Investigation	Action Taken
13/14	07 Nov	0745	0850	<p>Poor rate of climb toward Wandsworth Bridge of several aircraft noted during morning period (0830-0930 approx) causing noise disturbance and concern to 5th floor resident of river-front development near to heliport.</p> <p>SW11, Prices Court, Battersea</p>	<p>Spoke to ATC about any noted observations during period. One departure highlighted outside (before) period of complainant concern. Spoke to pilot of this flight who explained that strong prevailing winds from south were causing turbulence above lower levels as air spilled over rooftops of riverside developments on south bank of riverfront. Pilot elected to compromise rate of climb for speed to eventually climb rapidly from calm air through turbulent air to reach circuit height.</p> <p>Other pilots had been noted taking off with more caution than usual apparently for similar reasons.</p> <p>Strong winds were forecast for later that morning and winds were strengthening at lower levels (already noted by aircrew to be strong at higher levels).</p>	<p>Complainant advised by telephone and seemed satisfied with explanation.</p>

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NOISE COMPLAINTS SUMMARY Jan – Mar 2015

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Complaint Reference	Date of Complaint	Time of Occurrence	Time of Complaint	Brief Details of Complaint	Brief Details of Investigation	Action Taken
NIL RETURN FOR PERIOD						

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NOISE COMPLAINTS SUMMARY Apr 2015 only

Complaint Reference	Date of Complaint	Time of Occurrence	Time of Complaint	Brief Details of Complaint	Brief Details of Investigation	Action Taken
05/15	20/04/2015	Over Weekend	1500-1800	Resident has noticed general increase in traffic especially this weekend. Balham SW17	Four Helicopters used the southern Local Flying Area routing during the period mentioned.	Nature of the route covering a broad corridor to south (which should enable spreading of noise concerns due to direct over-flight) explained to complainant.
06/15	28/04/2015 & 4/08/2014	Continuing	Ongoing	Complainant is a resident of Altura Tower directly overlooking heliport manouvring area. Concerned about noise and air pollution caused by use of apron areas closer to Altura Tower vs. Falcon Wharf on south side of heliport site including (rotors-running) refueling of London Air Ambulance (LAA). Observations made about use of heliport by military aircraft for "practice" flights. Bridges Court SW11	Management of use of all areas of heliport apron according to operational need with safety a priority in decision-making. Rotors-running refuels for LAA are conducted within the strict safety & "neighbourly" guidelines to expedite turn-around and maintain emergency response availability. "Familiarisation" flights for unfamiliar crew accompanied by already familiar crew are a requirement for all operators to maintain safety standards and "fly neighbourly" standards.	Investigation findings sent by email to LHCG secretary.
07/15	29/04/2015	Continuing	Ongoing	Complainant disturbed by noise of helicopters travelling N-S in Norland Road area of Shepherds Bush. Strongly believing that they are being funneled overhead of property. Shepherds Bush W11	Aircraft are flying along an established route between heliport and Brent reservoir at permitted heights. Route is confined to a corridor under London Area radar oversight between (descending) inbound flights to Heathrow governed by big-jet collision avoidance systems and an exclusion area to east which includes Royal Palaces & Embassy quarter of Kensington & Chelsea, Westminster, Camden.	Investigation findings sent by email to LHCG secretary. N.B. Similar complaint from Hammersmith/ Shepherds Bush area received Oct 2014 requesting high level information and statistic on movement levels. No follow-up or reporting carried out. Route can be up to 30% of heliport traffic serving destinations north. Permitted clearance heights have increased by 300ft depending on weather/ cloud base since October 2014. Noise should therefore be alleviated.

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LONDON HELIPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Meeting: 8th June 2015

**DISTURBANCE FROM HELICOPTERS
FLYING ALONG WESTERN SIDE OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA**

FOR DISCUSSION

**Guy Denington
Shared Services Policy Officer**

**Environmental Quality Team, Directorate for Environmental Health
Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea**

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Residents have grown accustomed to helicopter flights across the Royal Borough, whether operated by the emergency services, or commercial concerns. Occasionally complaints are received by the Council from residents in the south of the borough troubled by flights using the London Heliport, or otherwise from those living in the Notting Hill Carnival area during Carnival weekend, when police helicopters hover for extended periods observing events on the ground.
- 1.2 Since last autumn (2014) a resident from Norland ward in the north-west of the borough has complained that north/south flights of twin-engined helicopters are being concentrated along a narrow corridor on the western side of the borough and he finds the noise very disturbing. He has raised his complaint with one of his ward Councillors - Cllr Julie Mills, and also the CAA. It is uncertain whether his annoyance is shared by other residents nearby, because experience suggests that potential complainants tend not to regard the Council as an appropriate channel to air their concerns about aircraft noise.

2.0 Factual basis for disturbance

- 2.1 Environmental Health Officers are not aware of any means of tracking helicopter flights and do not have the resources to mount a noise monitoring exercise.
- 2.2 In any case it is our understanding that unless the pilots are transgressing a requirement under the Air Navigation Order (Civil Aviation Act 1982 section 76) mainly concerned with safety, there is no formal action that can be taken,

and of course the offence of a statutory nuisance is expressly excluded by section 79, subsection 6 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA).

- 2.3 There is also no obvious way of ascertaining how many of these flights are connected with the Heliport, or what proportion if any are operated by the emergency services.

3.0 Questions for consideration

- 3.1 Does any member of the Committee know of any way towards substantiating the complaint, for instance by reference to any records kept by Air Traffic Control (ATC) or others? Is the Committee itself aware of any previous complaints of this nature?
- 3.2 Does the Committee consider that a system of helicopter route alternation* might be feasible, perhaps introduced initially on a trial/voluntary basis, to give some relief to residents under the flightpaths?
- 3.3 Are there any operational restrictions in relation to route alternation which would need to be addressed?
- 3.4 Does the Committee know of any other mitigation measures that could be applied?

**An alternation system might establish two north-south routes two to three miles apart with regular and published alternation times, similar to runway alternation at Heathrow airport.*

4.0 Summary

- 4.1 Helicopter noise is affecting a resident in north-west Kensington and may be affecting others. The CAA has received and responded to his concerns, but he is convinced that helicopter flights are being funnelled along a route passing over, or near to his house. He wants the Council to support him in pursuing his complaint. However the Council is aware that it has no formal means to take action on his behalf (i.e. s.80 EPA abatement notice) and has advised him accordingly.
- 4.2 As a proportion of the flights are likely to be connected with London Heliport the Committee may wish to offer advice on addressing the issue of helicopter noise, where flights are frequently using the same routes in the West/South London area.

FOR DISCUSSION

G. Denington 27.4.15/150323HeliportPaper