

**NOTES OF THE 48th ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
LIAISON GROUP OF UK AIRPORT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES (UKACCs)
HELD ON 27th AND 28th NOVEMBER 2025 AT BRISTOL AIRPORT**

ACCs present:

Birmingham	Colin Flack (UKACCs Chair)
Bristol	Rosemary Tyler
East Midlands	David Hall
Edinburgh	Alicia Fox
Farnborough	Guido Liguori
Gatwick	Robert Carr
Glasgow	Janice Hogarth
Heathrow	Colin Flack (UKACCs Chair)
	Tom Crowley
	Monique Smart
	David Flint
	Tracey Walther
	Mark Izatt
	Tiana Kristeen – day 1 only
	Rebecca Cox
Leeds Bradford	Alan Wrigley
Luton	Martin Routledge
Manchester	Rachel Bailey
Prestwick	Denise French
Southampton	Bob Smith
Stansted	James Duguid
	Shena Winning
	Iain Stewart
Teesside	David Cosgrove

In attendance:

Wayne Gasson	DfT (part)
Huw Jones	DfT (part)
UKACCs Secretariat	Paula Street

Bristol Airport:

Graeme Gamble, Chief Operating Officer (part)
Tracy Comer, Media and Community Relations Manager (part)
Harry Ellis, Corporate Affairs & Community Engagement (part)
Ian Drury, Head of Corporate Affairs, Media & Community Relations (part)
James Cox, Public Affairs Manager (part)

Apologies:

Aberdeen	Alan Stewart
Belfast International	Tom McGrath
Inverness	Pat Hayden
London City	Duncan Alexander
Newcastle	John Littleton
Teesside	Brian Robinson

DAY ONE

1. SESSION 1

1.1 Welcome and introductions

- David Hall, Chair of Bristol ACC, formally welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the airport team. He briefly summarised his background and his experience of the airport since the 1980s.
- Colin Flack thanked Bristol Airport for hosting this year and welcomed those who were attending for the first time – Alicia Fox (Bristol), Tiana Kristeen (Heathrow), and Rosemary Tyler (Birmingham).

1.2 Notes of 2024 annual meeting

- Any matters arising were to be picked up on the agenda today.
APPROVED: the notes of the 2024 annual meeting.

1.3 Bristol Airport – now and into the future

- A presentation was received from Graeme Gamble, Chief Operating Officer at Bristol Airport, which would be circulated with the meeting notes.
- The airport's purpose was defined as "connecting our region responsibly", and the underpinning vision, values, and strategic intents were outlined.
- It served the whole of the southwest peninsula, with flights to 115 destinations. Its key competitors were Gatwick, Birmingham, and Heathrow.
- Passenger numbers had risen from 7.7million in 2016 and were predicted to reach 11.7million in 2027, close to the 12million planning permission cap. The mix of airlines had contributed significantly to this growth and the strong recovery following the pandemic.
- The airport's Sustainability Strategy 2023 – 2028 set out its environmental commitments. The outcome of some of the work had been seen during this morning's visit to the Public Transport Interchange and the Recycling Centre, and it had also been involved in hydrogen trials.
- It was a significant employer in the region and its contribution to the local and regional economy was described, including through apprenticeships; supply chain; school and college engagement; and its community funds.
- The issues for the local community in relation to living near the airport were night flights; noise; parking in local villages; and traffic and congestion.
- Its plans for the future were outlined with a £400m investment programme running over five years, the first phase of which was now complete and work on phase 2 underway. Following this, the aim was to serve 15 million passengers per annum. The growth plans up to 2040 to achieve this included a runway extension; new long haul opportunities; enhanced customer experience; additional aircraft stands; and easier boarding. It was anticipated that this would bring benefits such as employment; increased passenger choice; support for inbound tourism; investment in public transport; and a continued commitment to net zero.
- In response to comments and questions, a number of points were clarified, including:
 - The airport would be required to apply for planning permission to raise the passenger cap.
 - Its ownership had changed this month to an investment organisation with aviation experience who supported the current business plan.
 - Noise was a challenging issue, particularly given the airport's location in an area with low ambient background noise. It was recognised that future growth could result in increased congestion, and it continued to invest in road improvements and commit to increasing the public transport mode share.
 - The night flight restrictions were 4000 movements per annum, which were monitored closely against noise quota conditions by the local planning authority. The airport ensured that it did not exceed these as it recognised that breaking the limits would result in a break in trust.
 - Good progress was being made in relation to hitting interim targets for net zero, though it was anticipated that in 2029-30 the airport would have to look at offsetting to reach

them. In relation to the supply chain, they were working with businesses to support them drive the agenda but would not be able to do this contractually until the airport itself had achieved its own targets.

1.4 Bristol Airport ACC

- David Hall outlined his experience as Chair of Bristol Airport's ACC over the past three years and what he saw to be the opportunities for the ACC to be involved in the forthcoming period of growth. The ACC aimed to be a forum for exchange of information where everyone had a voice, and the airport team had always been transparent and supportive.
- During this time, the main issues for stakeholders had been noise; traffic and infrastructure challenges; the environment; and serial complainers.
- In response to comments and questions, a number of points were clarified, including:
 - Membership of the ACC comprised unitary and parish councillors, business groups, and airlines, but did not include community or campaign groups. The politically associated challenges of local authority representation were discussed.
 - Meetings were open to members of the public, who also had the option to join virtually, though this was usually only one or two people. If they wished to speak they had to register their interest in doing so and had a specifically allotted period at the start of the meeting to air their views. In David's experience, attendance by the public had not constrained the transparency of the airport.
 - The ACC met quarterly and had two subgroups to consider the environment and community funds. Occasionally an item on its constitution was included as a reminder to members of the ACC's purpose.

2. SESSION 2

2.1 DfT – Sector Update and Forward Look

- A presentation was received from Wayne Gasson and Huw Jones from the Commercial and Engagement Team, DfT.
- This included an update on the ministerial team and key statistics on aviation in 2024 and 2025. In the first two quarters of 2025 air traffic movements were up on 2019 levels by 1.22%, load factors are at 83% up 1% on 2019 levels, freight tonnes of 1.5 m in 2019 were now at 1m. On time performance in 2019 was 79% and is now back at 77% after a challenging few years. The DfT is currently working with airports on winter resilience checks and getting assurance on preparedness. The leisure market is still dominant, with strong performance in terms of traffic across many airports. Business travel has not recovered after the pandemic.
- Aviation demand remained heavily in favour of London and the southeast – London handled around 60% of passengers with regional airports playing an important role in supporting their local economies. The DfT is looking at how to support regional growth and regional connectivity in 2026.
- The value of the aviation sector to the UK economy is estimated at a £20bn contribution to UK GDP; supports more than 240,000 jobs; the value of freight handled was £300bn in imports and exports; and increased investment in airports and airport groups was outlined highlighting the attractiveness of investing in UK aviation.
- With regard to the expansion of Heathrow Airport, the UK Government announced in late 2025 it selected Heathrow Airport Limited's (HAL) third runway proposal as the basis for expansion and had now formally commenced its review of the ANPS. The ANPS review is formally scheduled to reach public consultation by July 2026. Additionally, London City, Luton, and Gatwick had growth approved this year, and other airports had developed masterplans for capacity expansion. Airports have invested in redevelopment of airport infrastructure to more sustainable operations and improving passenger journeys.
- The anticipated challenges for 2026 were:
 - aviation skills – much experience was lost during the pandemic and work is ongoing to address the shortfall in skilled workers;
 - accessibility – there has been a dramatic rise in demand, the Accessibility Task and Finish Group published its report July 2025 containing 19 recommendations to the

industry and CAA. The Group will now focus on championing the report and industry's focus on implementing it. The DfT will update UKACCs on its work in the New Year;

- SAF – the SAF bill is going through parliament and hoping to achieve Royal Assent by the new year. There is a requirement for aviation fuel suppliers to use 10% aviation fuel by 2030. Negotiations in the EU on the emission trading scheme and a more sustainable market and reaching net zero in aviation have commenced;
- security and border transformation – as of July 2025 over 13 million travel authorisations had been issued, over 10 million e-visas had been issued with physical visas being phased out in 2026. Contactless e-gates are being introduced using facial technology with a 2-week pilot recently concluding at Manchester Airport, which was the first test of the new technology.
- In response to comments and questions on the presentation so far, a number of points were raised and clarified, including:
 - Delays on arrival at Border Control and capacity with airport terminals to accommodate new technology - The DfT, together with Airports UK, were in discussion with Border Force about capacity issues and staffing arrangements.
ACTION: DfT to arrange for Border Force to talk to UKACCs further about this when they were able to in the new year.
 - In relation to eVisas, it would be helpful if more detailed information could be made available to airports planning major capital expenditure on expansion or reconfiguration about how many gates would be needed and what the space requirement would be.
 - There was no firm date for when the rules and messaging around liquids would change. A significant amount of investment and resourcing had been put into getting this done and discussion and testing was ongoing.
- With regard to airspace modernisation, [a consultation on changes to the air navigation directions and guidance](#) had been published this week, the closing date for which would be the 20th January 2026. [*the DfT extended the closing date to 26th January*]
- Work would begin on the next night flights regime for the three noise designated London airports in 2026 which would be partly informed by the [Aviation Night Noise Effects \(ANNE\)](#) study. The public facing material on this research was not yet available.
ACTION: Tim May, DfT, to talk to UKACCs early in the new year when more information on the outcomes of the ANNE work was available.
- Members discussed the problematic notion of what constituted "night", as this was dependent on the airport, and any regulatory regime or relevant local planning complications. There was consensus that it would be helpful if the DfT developed a universal national definition of "night" which ideally accounted for health impacts of night noise as evidenced by the World Health Organisation. This would be especially useful for non-designated airports.
ACTION: UKACCs to take this forward in their regular engagement with the DfT.
- The aims and objectives of the Aviation Council were outlined. In recognition of the sector as a driver for growth, a large area of its focus was likely to be competitiveness in the context of a challenging economy and global market. Members commented on the fact that Air Passenger Duty had once again increased in the budget, which would directly impact the competitiveness of the UK's aviation sector. The DfT advised it would continue to work with industry partners and the Treasury on this matter.
- In 2026, key areas of focus for the DfT would be the integrated transport strategy for England; a potential Aviation Bill that might include safety, competition, consumers; supporting regional airports; slots policy reform; and setting national principles for mayoral decision making in infrastructure. Additionally, aviation growth forecasts would be published for the first time since 2018, and these would be used to inform the ANPS.
- In relation to ACCs, following a request, a review would be undertaken of the list of designated airports. The DfT would continue to work closely with UKACCs. The Minister received regular updates and looked forward to meeting with UKACCs in the new year.

3. SESSION 3 – UKACCs discussion

- An open discussion session took place during which those present were asked to consider how the airspace modernisation process was progressing for their airports; any lessons that could be learned from Glasgow and Edinburgh who had moved on to the consultation stage; and share any insights that would be helpful in responding to the aforementioned DfT consultation published this week.
- David Flint reported that no material feedback had been received on the process at Glasgow Airport, and that lessons learned last time had been incorporated, for example the use of sound booths. Their consultation would close on 20th January, and he would inform the Secretariat should anything come to light after this.
- Robert Carr reported that Edinburgh ACC had been given the opportunity to comment on consultation documents at a very early stage, as had the Noise Board. The information required was dictated by CAP1616 and the challenge was to make this accessible to all as well as allaying suspicions that decisions had not already been made, and that people had a genuine opportunity to have influence in the process.
- Successful collaboration had taken place between Edinburgh and Glasgow, and it was suggested that similar coordination would be vital across London. The issue of whether the design process included provision for an expanded Heathrow was raised as messaging had been confusing. The DfT clarified that there is a provision for an expanded Heathrow. The core design process being constructed assumes Heathrow's expansion is a central requirement.
- The issue of why it was proposed in the Air Navigation Guidance consultation to change the altitude-based priorities for airspace design was discussed. The proposal would see the priority categories change from three to two removing the category of noise and carbon emissions from 4000ft to 7000ft resulting in noise only being a priority below 4000ft. It was agreed that there would need to be clear guidance on why this change was being implemented to prevent it from being seen as a cynical move which would have an impact on those who were – or would be – overflowed.

ACTION: UKACCs to arrange a webinar with Stu Lindsay in December. *[Post-meeting note: this was arranged for 5th December and a Teams invitation would be circulated].*

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 1645

DAY TWO

4. SESSION 4 – (UKACCs Internal Business attended by ACC Chairs and Secretaries only)

4.1 UKACCs Accounts

- The finances were reported to be more stable this year, helped by last year's increase in subscriptions and growth at some airports resulting in them moving up the membership scale. The income and expenditure account was summarised and the organisation had £14,500 in reserve at the year end.

APPROVED: the accounts for 2024/2025.

4.2 Chair's Report and Key Issues

- A paper had been circulated in advance and the Chair elaborated on the highlights, including the new logo; the proposed new UKACCs website; and the continued work with the CAA and DfT to influence policy.
- The visibility matrix presented at last year's annual meeting had been refreshed and showed a noticeable improvement. It was recognised that some ACCs would not be in a position to achieve 'green' across the board due to their dependency on their airports.
- With regard to the new website, two quotes for its construction had been obtained from external providers, the costings for which were almost identical. It was recommended that the quote proposal using WordPress be selected as it would enable simple replication of the current content; provide the best search engine optimisation; and offer futureproofing in terms of enhancements going forward. The supplier also offered green hosting. The

impact on UKACCs finances was outlined and both the construction and year on year costs would be affordable.

APPROVED: the proposal to take forward phase one of the WordPress option.

- A question was raised regarding a possible increase in the job duties of the Secretariat as a result of managing the new website.
ACTION: the Working Group to review this in the Spring once the website was operational.
AGREED: that the Secretariat's salaries be increased annually by the Consumer Price Index as the subscriptions were.
- It was suggested that it would be helpful in the future to have a 'live' section on the website on current issues and open consultations, though it was recognised that this would have resource implications. The pros and cons of setting up a members' area was also discussed.

5. SESSION 5

5.1 Sharing Practice, Ideas and Experience

- Today the UKACCs team formally launched '[A Practical Guide – Sharing Practical Ideas and Experience](#)' which had been discussed at last year's annual meeting and developed collaboratively subsequently. In particular, the Chair thanked Tiana Kristeen from Heathrow CISHA who had undertaken a great deal of work on the formatting and presentation. The guide was intended to be a living document which would reflect future change as necessary and was complementary to the DfT's guidelines. In addition to informing the work of ACCs, it could also be useful in helping individual members and the public to understand their role and remit.
- Following today's launch, the next steps would be to publish it on the UKACCs website and roll it out to all members. In the coming months, UKACCs would promote the guide through Airports UK and the Aviation Environment Federation. It was also hoped that UKACCs could secure a feature in Airports UK magazine and the International Airport Review.
ACTION: All ACCs to pass it on to their airports and members and include a link on their own websites.
- Wayne Gasson, DfT thanked UKACCs for the significant amount of work that had gone into the guide, which had been shared with the Minister and which the DfT would promote as part of its regular engagement with airports and airlines.

6. SESSION 6

6.1 Our airports: 2025 experiences, future opportunities & challenges

- A paper had been circulated in advance of the meeting which summarised ACCs' contributions regarding the key issues they had dealt with in 2025.
- Four top issues had been selected as topics for round table discussions during this item. These were:
 - Terminal developments and passenger experience
 - Car parking and drop-off
 - Resilience and incident communication
 - Surface access and major infrastructure projectsIn addition, each table considered managing changes to ACC membership and/or the impacts of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in England.
- Following the round tables, key highlights were shared and discussed more widely. The Chair asked for feedback on how to maintain impetus on the issues raised.
ACTION: Secretariat to set up an ad hoc working group for sharing information on LGR and exploring a common approach to managing changes in ACCs' memberships.

7. SESSION 7

7.1 Enhancing service standards and access to assistance at UK airports

- A presentation was received from James Fremantle, Senior Manager, Consumer Policy and Enforcement at the CAA, which would be circulated with the meeting notes.

- The CAA's role in relation to accessibility was summarised, which relied upon reputational enforcement to incentivise change.
- The data showed a significant increase in the percentage of passengers requiring assistance, with the figure for 2010 being 0.9% rising to 1.9% in 2024. This was expensive for airports to manage, and the CAA was working with them to try to prevent the service being used by those without a genuine need for it. There was also an increasing number of people travelling with electric mobility aids which presented further challenges for airports and airlines. Pre-notification rates had improved during the period, but there were still on average 20% of people requesting assistance on the day.
- The increased demand for assistance reflected changes in demographics; societal attitudes; policies; and technology, which were further elaborated on. It was noted that [CAP2374](#) did allow for tailoring appropriate assistance and there were now more initiatives that enabled people access to wheelchairs to be mobilised by friends and family.
- The CAA's Airport Accessibility Framework, which set and monitored quality standards, also helped airports provide a minimum standard of timely and customer-oriented assistance service to passengers. The annual report assessed them on waiting times in departures and arrivals; customer satisfaction; and engagement with users of the service. The CAA was considering extending this to include results of their on-airport inspections and ad-hoc requests from individuals. The findings of [this year's report](#) were summarised.
- The DfT's Aviation Accessibility Task and Finish Group had recommended that the framework be reviewed to bring in additional criteria which would allow for a much broader assessment. The CAA had also developed a complementary framework for airlines and it would produce the first of a series of reports in March 2026.
- In response to comments and questions, a number of points were clarified, including:
 - Special Services Request (SSR) codes were governed by IATA, who had set up a working group to review the codes. The CAA was a member of the Group. The possibility of developing new codes to reflect more complex needs was being considered.
 - The issue of access to batteries for electric mobility aids was challenging in relation to balancing passenger needs with that of safety and security. It was recognised that this was in many ways a staff training issue on the carriage of dangerous goods.
 - The new generation of security scanners at airports had been creating issues for passengers with stoma bags and again this required specific staff training as well as effective communications by airlines and airports. The CAA was encouraging airports to develop separate security lanes for those with complex needs to remove anxiety, which could be a barrier to travel, though it was recognised that this was easier for larger airports to provide additional lanes.

7.2 ACC's priorities for special assistance at their airport

- A paper on recent progress by the DfT and CAA in enhancing passenger accessibility had been circulated in advance of the meeting.
- A round table discussion had been planned for today with the aim of helping the Secretariat to develop a unified view to take forward in their engagement with relevant stakeholders. Each table were asked to consider five areas:
 - Challenges and a tailored service
 - Innovation and independence
 - Data robustness and oversight
 - Compensation
 - What ACCs can do to help improve passenger experience
- A range of feedback was received following discussions. In particular, common themes were managing the problem of abuse of the service whilst recognising that most requests for assistance were genuine and dealing with the challenges posed by an ageing population and a broader scope of needs beyond physical mobility. There was consensus that what was required was a system that captured passengers' needs before they flew and communicated this across their journey.

8. SESSION 8

8.1 Vision for environmental reporting in aviation

- A paper had been circulated in advance of the meeting which summarised the CAA's work on environmental reporting over the past year and the outcome of its consultation on developing the Aviation Environmental Report, which was a new function and area of responsibility for the CAA.
- The CAA would publish further report at the end of the year in which they were looking to refine the data granularity to give a more detailed assessment and improve transparency. Delegates were asked to consider which areas they would like UKACCs to concentrate on as the reporting system evolved.
- Suggested areas of focus included encouraging the CAA to be forward thinking about ultrafine particles; to account for the impact of aviation on health beyond just those areas that were legislated upon; and to consider mitigations due to climate change adaptations. The roadmap indicated that they planned to report on emissions from a wider range of sources in 2028, which would allow differentiation between airports and motorways. This was felt to be very important and ideally should be looked at earlier.
- There was also support for UKACCs to continue to push for environmental reporting in the same format as that for accessibility, which would enable easy comparison of airports.

8.2 UKACCs Chair's closing remarks

- The Chair summarised the actions that had been agreed over the past two days and set out his plan to gather the collective thoughts and consider how to maintain the collaborative approach between ACCs and the momentum between annual meetings.
- He thanked Bristol ACC and the airport team for hosting the event and for planning a useful visit. Further thanks were given to all those who attended and to the Secretariat.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 1315