

THE LONDON HELIPORT CONSULTATIVE GROUP

Agenda for the meeting to be held on Monday, 16th November 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

12th November 2015

AGENDA

1. **Minutes - 8th June 2015** (Pages 5 - 8)

The Consultative Group are asked to confirm that they approve the draft minutes of the last meeting held on 8th June 2015 (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. **Monitoring of Helicopter Noise Levels**

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

3. **Information on Helicopter Movements** (Pages 9 - 12)

Summary information on helicopter movements at the London Heliport in Quarters 2 and 3 of 2015, provided by the Heliport Manager, Simon Hutchins, is included herewith for information. (Attached - Papers B and C).

4. **Noise Complaints** (Pages 13 - 18)

Information on noise complaints received by the London Heliport in Quarters 2 and 3 of 2015 and on the action taken in response by the Heliport, provided by Simon Hutchins, is included herewith for information. (Attached – Papers D and E).

5. **Submission by Riverside Tower Residents' Association, Imperial Wharf** (Pages 19 - 24)

To consider submission submitted by Riverside Tower Residents' Association, Imperial Wharf, LB of Hammersmith and Fulham. (Attached – Paper F)

6. **London Heliport Consultative Group - Way Forward** (Pages 25 - 28)

To consider paper submitted by Councillor Culhane and Christina Smyth. (Attached – Paper G)

7. **Any Other Business**

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

8. **Date of Next Meeting**

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

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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, 8th June 2015 at 7 p.m.

PRESENT

Chairman

Councillor Culhane (Hammersmith and Fulham Borough Council)

Residents' representatives

Mr Geoff Brindle
Mr David Brown
Ms Christina Smyth

Local Authority representatives

Councillor Condon-Simmonds (Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea)
Councillor Speck (Wandsworth Borough Council)
Councillor Torrington (Wandsworth Borough Council)

Users' representatives

Capt Michael Hampton

Observers, advisers and officers

Mr Simon Hutchins (The London Heliport)
Mr Jim Walker (Civil Aviation Authority)
Mr Colin Stanbury (Wandsworth Borough Council)
Mr Martin Newton (Wandsworth Borough Council)
Mr Guy Dennington (Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea)

Apologies

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

Chairman and Membership of the LHCG

The Group welcomed Councillor Culhane (London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham), Christina Smyth (Hammersmith and Fulham residents' representative) and Geoff Brindle (Wandsworth residents' representative) to their first meeting.

In accordance with the previously agreed arrangements for the rotation of chairmanship between the Boroughs, Councillor Culhane took the Chair.

Members also welcomed Jim Walker (CAA), Guy Dennington (Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea) and David Egerton-Smith (resident from Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea) to the meeting.

The Group noted, with regret, the recent death of Seth Stiles, a former Wandsworth resident representative member who stood down as a member of the Group in 2014.

Minutes - 17th November 2014

On item 2, the minutes of the meeting held on 17th November 2014 were confirmed and signed as correct.

The minutes were thereupon signed by the Chairman.

Order of Proceedings

The Group agreed to consider item 6 as next business.

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

On item 6, Guy Dennington outlined the concerns raised by a resident in the Norland ward of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea that were referred to in his paper to the Group.

Jim Walker confirmed that the flight path being used over the area is not an established route but can be used by a multi-engine helicopter after clearance by NATS. It was noted that around 80% of flights are now by multi-engine craft.

With the consent of the Group, Mr Egerton-Smith then asked whether flight paths were not limited to approved heli-routes that generally following the river and Jim Walker said that users of multi-engine helicopters could request NATS to grant permission for a flight away from these usual established routes and that these requests could be allowed by NATS if considered safe. He confirmed that flights of this kind were not considered to represent a safety issue in terms of the rules relating to safe flying altitudes which took account of the 'separation' required from Heathrow traffic.

Discussion continued and, following further questions from Mr Egerton-Smith and Christina Smyth, Jim Walker said that he could discuss with NATS the possibility of alternative routes that could be used over this area and would report back when this information was received. He confirmed that there was no 'hidden agenda' to increase air traffic over any one area.

At the conclusion of discussion, the Chairman thanked Mr Egerton-Smith and Mr Walker for attending the meeting and putting forward their views on the issue.

Monitoring of Helicopter Noise Levels

On item 3, Colin Stanbury reminded the Group that the Heliport had previously indicated a willingness to assist in the proposed new monitoring. Dr Stephen Dance

of South Bank University had confirmed that the project remained of interest to the University.

Colin Stanbury said that a great deal of data existed for the previous noise monitoring at the Heliport itself and that the new proposal would aim to be more community based, mapping the noise levels over a wider area including across the river, to give a greater understanding of the levels at which helicopter noise initiates significant complaints. The next step would be to put the project plan together and to find volunteers in relevant areas that would be agreeable to have the unobtrusive monitoring equipment at their property for over a period of time. He confirmed that no other Heliport to his knowledge in Europe was proposing to undertake a project of this kind.

Christina Smyth confirmed that she would like to have the opportunity of discussing the project with Dr Dance. Jim Walker expressed an interest in the project and in receiving further details for the consideration of the CAA's Environment Department.

Councillor Torrington said that it would be useful if the monitoring was able to identify the various helicopter uses - such as Police, Army, sightseeing, for example – and indicated a willingness to help identify some possible volunteers in the Wandsworth area. The Chairman confirmed that Hammersmith and Fulham would also be in a position to do this possibly by way of newsletter.

Information on Helicopter Movements

On item 4, Simon Hutchins told the Group that the number of helicopter movements is increasing again as the UK economy strengthens. In response to a question from Geoff Brindle, it was noted that the Heliport is now operating at around 75% capacity. In response to a question from Christina Smyth, he confirmed that forecasting of movement numbers is only based on general trends that now indicate increases in the use of the Heliport are likely.

Discussion continued and Capt. Michael Hampton highlighted the changes that have occurred with helicopter use over the last 20 years that have led to greater use, including the airspace restrictions with single engine helicopters, and the fact that the commercial element tends now to all be twin engine craft. This view was endorsed by Jim Walker and the Group noted again that the wider use of twin engine helicopters has meant greater flexibility for operators and more freedoms to fly outside of the 'lanes' that single-engine helicopters have to use.

Councillor Torrington asked whether the monitoring of noise levels project could also look at types of helicopter to try and encourage use of quieter craft and Colin Stanbury undertook to include provision for an assessment of this kind.

Noise Complaints

On item 5, the Group noted the latest position on complaints.

Altura Tower

On item 7, Councillor Speck referred to the comment put forward in the resident's e-mail that '...Wandsworth is taking a less strict approach to the "polluters"...'. In

response, Colin Stanbury confirmed that the Council does not grant any sort of dispensation for the Heliport in relation to allowing air pollution in excess of what would be normally permitted elsewhere. The Group noted that emissions concerns in relation to the Heliport and Altura Tower had also been debated at earlier meetings.

Discussion continued and Councillor Torrington asked whether the Air Ambulance is required to keep rotors running during its visits to the Heliport. Simon Hutchins confirmed that this is not essential but that the concession is offered to the Air Ambulance to help ensure the helicopter remained immediately operational. He confirmed that the use of landing area No. 2 for the Air Ambulance refuelling is entirely based on the requirement for a quicker refuelling and flight away for the helicopter.

The Secretary confirmed that the resident had previously been offered a visit to the Heliport's facilities and that this would again be suggested.

Any Other Business

On item 8, the following matters were raised:-

- (a) David Brown referred to the flying of drones from the riverside walk in the vicinity of the Heliport and the potential danger this might cause to Heliport traffic. Jim Walker confirmed that the person flying the drone was responsible for its 'conduct', that a fact sheet relating to the use of drones was available from the CAA and that unauthorised instances of this kind could be reported to the Police or to the CAA, who would assist the Police were any prosecution to take place.

The Group also noted the danger that could be caused to helicopters targeted with lasers.

The Chairman indicated that facts on these issues may be able to be made available to Hammersmith and Fulham residents via that Council's newsletter.

- (b) Simon Hutchins again referred to the invitation for new members of the Group to make a visit to the Heliport to see the facilities.

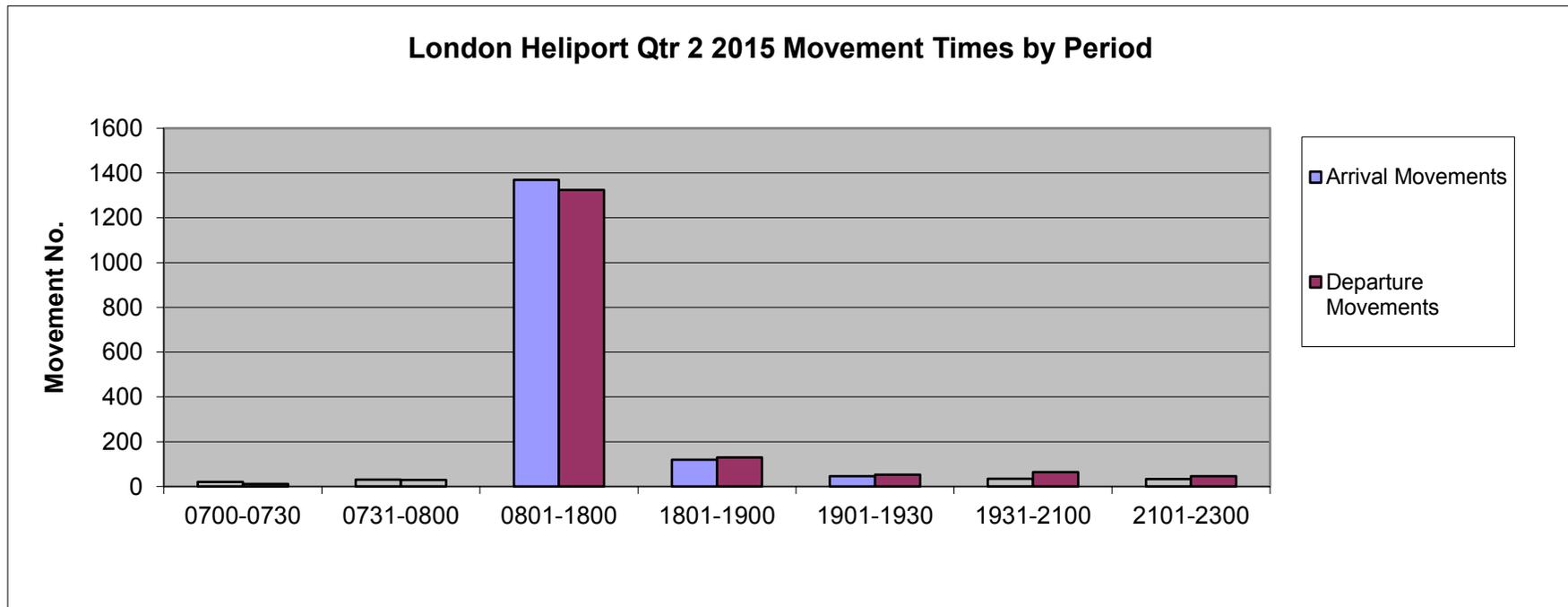
Date of Next Meeting

The Group decided to meet again on Monday, 16th November 2015.

The meeting ended at 7.58 pm

Qtr 2 2015 Movement Time Band Breakdown

| Time Band | Arrival Movements | Departure Movements | Total |
|--------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| 0700-0730 | 20 | 11 | 31 |
| 0731-0800 | 31 | 29 | 60 |
| 0801-1800 | 1370 | 1324 | 2694 |
| 1801-1900 | 120 | 130 | 250 |
| 1901-1930 | 46 | 52 | 98 |
| 1931-2100 | 35 | 64 | 99 |
| 2101-2300 | 33 | 46 | 79 |
| Total | 1655 | 1656 | 3311 |

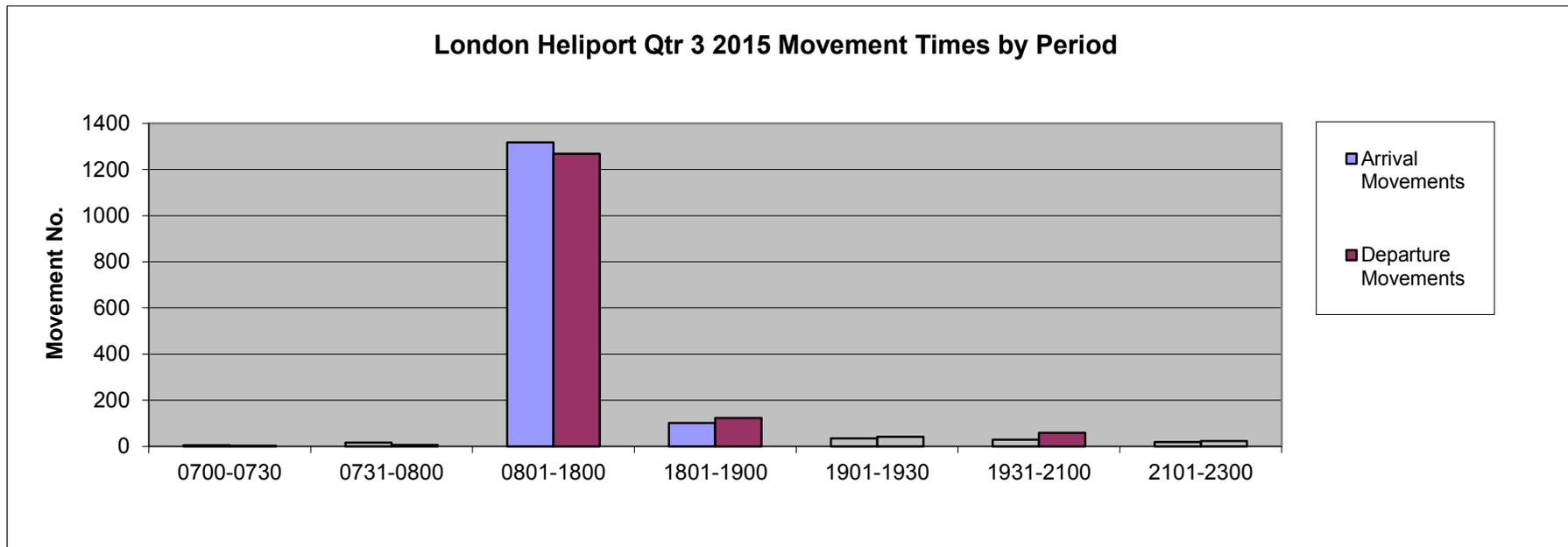


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Qtr 3 2015 Movement Time Band Breakdown

| Time Band | Arrival Movements | Departure Movements | Total |
|--------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| 0700-0730 | 5 | 3 | 8 |
| 0731-0800 | 16 | 6 | 22 |
| 0801-1800 | 1318 | 1268 | 2586 |
| 1801-1900 | 101 | 123 | 224 |
| 1901-1930 | 35 | 41 | 76 |
| 1931-2100 | 29 | 59 | 88 |
| 2101-2300 | 19 | 23 | 42 |
| Total | 1523 | 1523 | 3046 |



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NOISE COMPLAINTS SUMMARY Apr - Jun 2015

| | 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 & 4/08/2015 | 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. |

NOISE COMPLAINTS SUMMARY Apr - Jun 2015

| | | | | | | |
|-------|------------|------------|---------|---|--|---|
| 07/15 | 29/04/2015 | Continuing | Ongoing | <p>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.</p> <p align="center">Shepherds Bush W11</p> | <p>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.</p> | <p>Investigation findings sent by email to LHCG secretary.</p> <p>N.B. Similar complaint from Hammersmith/ Shepherds Bush area received Oct 2014 requesting high level information and statistic on movement levels.</p> <p>No follow-up or reporting carried out.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Noise should therefore be alleviated.</p> |
| 8/15 | 03/06/2015 | 1530 | 1535 | <p>Complainant disturbed by noise created by first of two military helicopters departing to the West of the Heliport. Helicopter was alleged to have flown directly overhead the Battersea Reach development and is alleged to have been the second helicopter that day to have flown the same route overhead. This is supposedly not the first time that residents have been disturbed by the same incidents.</p> <p align="center">Battersea Reach SW11</p> | <p>Duty ATC officer reported nothing unusual about the helicopter's departure flight profile and that both aircraft flew a standard departure route and were definitely flying over the river and not over the development.</p> | <p>No further action was taken. Complaint was determined to be unfounded.</p> <p>Complainant did not want to leave either his full address or contact details but was informed of the WBC Consultative Group meetings as a point of focus moving forward.</p> |

NOISE COMPLAINTS SUMMARY Apr - Jun 2015

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|-------|----------|---------|---------|---|---|--|
| 09/15 | 27/05/15 | N/K | N/K | <p>Complainant disturbed by variously low, noisy, fast, turning aircraft. In particular large military aircraft (sometimes in formation).</p> <p>Compliant raised by environmental service working on behalf of residents of LB Richmond (and also LB Merton)</p> <p>Lonsdale Road, Barnes SW13 9PY</p> | <p>Complainant lives alongside River Thames on a bend in the river just east of a point (Kew) where the Heli-route max. permitted height is reduced due to Heathrow Airport inbound traffic flying overhead. This area is therefore a particularly noise sensitive area. Larger aircraft flying low and fast and turning (to negotiate the bend in the river and maintain position over the river i.e. on-route) will increase noise experienced on the ground. Complainant supplied a selection of recent dates and times when disturbance caused.</p> | <p>Suggested that complaints be directed to CAA Aviation Noise and Environmental related complaints to highlight noise sensitivity of the area and also to MOD Low Flying Unit since CAA have no jurisdiction over military operations. Also invited environmental service of LB Richmond & Merton to request attendance at next meeting to discuss concerns raised. Findings passed back to complainant</p> |
| 10/15 | 10/06/15 | Ongoing | 09.00 | <p>General concern about height and frequency of flights.</p> <p>Frithville Gardens, Shepherds Bush W12 7JJ</p> | <p>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.</p> | <p>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 but complainant may also be experiencing seasonal increase in traffic</p> |
| 11/15 | 18/06/15 | ASCOT | 11:15AM | <p>Unacceptable level of noise far too busy during Royal Ascot. General concern about noise pollution, height and frequency of flights</p> <p>5 Warnham Court Road Carshalton SM5 3LY</p> | <p>Person complaining lives up on higher ground at southern boundary of Local Flying Area. One-way traffic system implemented for Ascot meant all Ascot-bound traffic leaving the heliport and heading south towards Ascot.</p> | <p>Complainant advised reason for short term high traffic levels. Traffic levels should reduce in later part of the day since returning traffic would arrive via another route.</p> |

NOISE COMPLAINTS SUMMARY Apr - Jun 2015

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|-------|------------------|--|---------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| 12/15 | 21/06/15 | 1030pm | 1050pm | Aircraft circling late at night Wandsworth Riverside Quarter SW18 1LP | Complainant was disturbed by an aircraft circling for over 20 mins. | Heliport had actually shut at 1800 with the last flight departing at 1730. Complainant was advised it would probably have been the National Police Support Unit supporting ground units and was happy not to proceed with the complaint further. |
| 13/15 | 27 & 28/06/15 | 0800-1700 | Numerous through both days | Residents close to Battersea Park and surrounding areas were disturbed by the noise and vibrations of the helicopter assigned to provide aerial TV coverage for the Formula E motor racing event staged in the park over the weekend. (generic complaint based on approx 15 calls over 2 days) | Helicopter operating in the area of the Battersea Park in advance and during event with Special Flight Permission from the CAA. Although the pilot informed London Heliport of operating times for most of the time not under control of London Heliport ATC. | No further action taken. Complainants given both Wandsworth Borough Council and CAA Environmental Page as a reference for further action if they felt warranted. |
| 14/15 | 27 & 28/06/15 | 0800 Saturday 1100 Sunday till 1600. | Via email on 15 th July | Resident objects to having her weekend disturbed by helicopter noise generated by Formula E events aerial filming. Rosenau Road SW11 4QX | Helicopter operating in the area of the Battersea Park in advance and during event with Special Flight Permission from the CAA. Although the pilot informed London Heliport of operating times for most of the time not under control of London Heliport ATC. | No further action taken. Complainants given both Wandsworth Borough Council and CAA Environmental Page as a reference for further action if they felt warranted. |

NOISE COMPLAINTS SUMMARY Jul – Sep 2015

| Complaint Reference | Date of Complaint | Time of Occurrence | Time of Complaint | Brief Details of Complaint | Brief Details of Investigation | Action Taken |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|---|---|--|
| 15/15 | 05/07/15 | Several months | 1450 | Over the last couple of months it have been noticed that pilots appear to be flying closer to the buildings rather than in the middle of the river. They appear to be flying at an angle over the building; pilots are not following the rules. Vicarage Crescent SW11 3LX | ATC has confirmed that no pilots are flying non standard flight profiles on approaching the Heliport. Any pilot found to be flying outside of the normal parameters would be notified and asked to contact the tower. | No further action taken. |
| 16/15 | 06/07/15 | 02 & 03/07/15 | 1600 | Complainant was concerned about multiple low flying aircraft which all seem to be flying low when climbing away. Bridges Wharf SW11 (river-facing) | Nothing out of the ordinary noted by ATC. Possible weather conditions (“hot & high”) or performance class of aircraft concerned. | No further action taken. |
| 17/15 | 06/07/15 | Any time of day | 13.58 | Resident has noticed an increase in traffic overflying in the last 5-7 years. Helicopters are flying too low and causing too much noise. Mc Farlane Road, Shepherd Bush W12 7JY. | Traffic Levels have declined and more recently increased over period of complaint though routing is heavily used for north-south traffic. | 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 but complainant may also be experiencing seasonal increase in traffic. (See complaint 10/2015, 10/06/15 Frithville Road W12 7 JJ) |
| 18/15 | 09/07/15 | Over last 6 months | 1515 | Complainant called to register objection to traffic deviating from the heli-routes over the river Crabtree Estate W6 (West of Fulham Palace Road) | Helicopters may be flying off route under the instruction of ATC when opposite direction traffic is approaching or site seeing flights turning over Barnes area on opposite bank of Thames. | London Sightseeing Tours Operator to be made aware if complaints persist. |
| 19/15 | 12/07/15 | Ongoing | 1006 | Resident wants to complain about the increase in traffic over her house, especially at the weekend, its causing upset due to the noise. Colehill Lane SW6 5EF | The sightseeing tours turn in this vicinity and the majority of their trips occur on weekends when residents will be at home. | London Sightseeing Tours Operator made aware. |
| 20/15 | 03/07/15 | 0900 | 0905 | Local Resident concerned about noise disturbance. Address not known, SW11 | There were aircraft rotors running on the apron at the time. | Delay in flight clearance for one aircraft caused extended engine-running of all aircraft contrary to normal noise abatement guideline. |

NOISE COMPLAINTS SUMMARY Jul – Sep 2015

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|-------|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|--|--|---|
| 21/15 | 02/08/15 & 08/08/15 | 01, 02 & 08/08/15 | Lunchtime both days | Resident wants to complain about regularity of flights and increase in traffic, especially at the weekend, associated with sightseeing flights. Thornhill Mews Deodar Road SW15 2NE | The sightseeing tours operator may have many flights on weekends from late morning to early afternoon routing upstream toward Barnes before returning overhead toward Central London. | London Sightseeing Tours Operator made aware.. |
|-------|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|--|--|---|

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James S. Hawken

Riverside Tower
The Boulevard
Imperial Wharf
Fulham
London SW6 2SW

10th November 2015

Mr Martin Newton
(Secretary to the London Heliport Consultative Group),
Administration Department,
Wandsworth Borough Council,
The Town Hall,
London SW18 2PU

Dear Mr Newton

Re. Submission to LHCG by Riverside Tower RA, Imperial Wharf

I am writing on behalf of the Riverside Tower Residents' Association (RTRA) regarding concerns about helicopter noise and related matters. I would be grateful if you could arrange for this letter to be circulated to members of The London Heliport Consultative Group for consideration and comment at the forthcoming meeting. I have emailed a copy direct to Councillor Larry Culhane, who I believe will chair the next meeting.

I hope this letter arrives in time for consideration at the meeting on 16th November 2015, but recognise that timing is probably tight. Please accept my apologies for the late submission.

Since the letter is rather long, I am numbering the paragraphs for ease of reference.

The points covered below are:

- Background
- Should Sightseeing Flights be running out of Battersea?
- Request for more detailed flight movement data
- Noise measurement - implementation of the survey by South Bank University
- Question regarding regular late evening helicopter arrival/departure
- Registration of complaints

Background

1. RTRA is an officially recognised RA representing the residents of Riverside Tower, a single block within the Imperial Wharf development in Sands End, Fulham. The building faces on to the Thames and looks across to Oyster Wharf on the Wandsworth bank. It is therefore diagonally opposite to The Battersea Heliport.

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2. The height of helicopters on approach and take-off, as they pass Riverside Tower, is roughly at the upper level of the 7 story block. The residents therefore experience in full measure the noise generated by arriving and departing helicopters - airborne and also on the helipad itself. Indeed, there is a feeling that the buildings surrounding the helipad form a convex shape, which actually amplifies the sound waves reaching our part of Imperial Wharf.
3. To give an idea of the noise level at take-off, it is not possible to conduct a telephone conversation with windows open. The noise from the heliport when helicopters are present with rotors running is at all times extremely disturbing.
4. It is not surprising, therefore, that RTRA is firmly of the view that an alternative site should be found for the heliport. It is totally wrong that it is located in the heart of what is now a densely occupied residential area.
5. We recognise the argument that the heliport pre-dates the Imperial Wharf development and that people were aware of the situation when purchasing homes. However, this argument is not universal in that it does not apply to the vast numbers of older properties within Wandsworth and adjoining boroughs, where residents also find noise levels very disturbing.
6. The above said, we probably have to accept that relocation is not going to happen in the short term. We should therefore concentrate on steps to reduce noise levels and certainly make sure that there is no increase or extension due to helicopter movements over and above the numbers currently authorised.
7. This letter is therefore about measures to reduce noise. The letter has been prompted by a recent meeting between Sands End residents and local MP, Greg Hands, where it was clear that many had deep concerns about helicopter movements and noise pollution.

Sightseeing trips

8. Although we have little sympathy for the view that a city such as London must make provision for helicopter services into the centre, we appreciate that many hold this opinion. We believe that the focus should be on essential services, such as police, HEMS and military/security. Beyond this there is a grey area, where it is difficult to draw the line.
9. The London Assembly's report in 2006, „London in a spin“, recognised the need to differentiate and recommended that *‘the CAA should impose restrictions on the use of helicopters for advertising and media so that the environmental impact can be minimised’*. It is not clear if this has yet been implemented.
10. At the time of The London Assembly's review, sightseeing flights out of Battersea were not taking place. Had this been the case, there is probably little doubt that they would have suffered the same fate as advertising and media and been banned. There is no way that these can be categorised as essential.
11. The sightseeing service commenced in 2013 and according to LHCG's minutes, these resulted in 300 movements in that year. There are no published figures for 2014 or 2015.
12. It would seem that LHCG was sensitive to possible criticism of the new service and at the meetings on 16th November 2013 and 20th May 2014 may have taken comfort in the report that no complaints had been received. In fact zero complaints was not surprising. Most residents were probably unaware and the same could also be true today. To know about the flights you either had to visit the Heliport's website or walk past the heliport. Very few residents actually do this.
13. There are several reasons why one has to be concerned about these flights. This year we have been observing the yellow helicopter, the one we believe to be the principal helicopter used for sightseeing trips. We have noted the following:

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- a. Many of the flights take place at weekends, particularly afternoons, on clear sunny days. In the past, helicopter movements have been relatively light at weekends and the increased traffic is therefore noticeable.
 - b. Residents in the local area tend to be at home at weekends and if the weather is fine, have windows open and generally relax.
 - c. A sightseeing flight lasts for 15 minutes. The helicopters usually take off in the direction of Wandsworth Bridge. After flying westwards for a couple of minutes they circle and fly back along the river in the direction of central London and the city. The flight pattern means that the helicopter, on each flight, is only out of ear-shot in Imperial Wharf for about 10 minutes.
 - d. It is often the case that the next sightseeing passengers are waiting when the helicopter returns. In this case it parks with rotors running. Passengers disembark and stand on the pad to have photos taken. The new passengers then embark, presumably have to listen to safety instructions and get strapped in prior to take-off. The time on the ground is 6 to 7 minutes with rotors running, sometimes longer.
 - e. The above means that when there is a sightseeing trip queue, in each hour, the helicopter is only out of ear-shot for about 30 minutes in total, up to 20 minutes is spent on the ground with rotors running and for 10 minutes it can be heard in flight. Allowing for other arrivals/departures at this time, the sight-seeing service has elevated the noise duration to almost continuous and this has to be unacceptable.
 - f. In the hour, the helicopter will have carried probably 20 or so passengers in total. Although not very relevant, we understand the fare is around £200 per person per trip, probably out of reach of the average tourist.
14. In the above we have made a number of assumptions based on our observations. These need to be checked against movement data which the Heliport should be able to supply. However, if the picture is as presented, action must be taken to impose restrictions on sightseeing flights.
 15. Even if the weekend picture at Imperial Wharf is not quite as bad as assumed, simple logic says that these flights have no place above our city and certainly operating out of Battersea.
 16. As a final word on this, RBKC is consulting on restriction of noisy building work, such as piling on construction sites at weekends. This is a sensible, environmentally friendly move. The same should apply to helicopter movements over the city!

Flight movement data

17. The information provided by the Heliport on flight movements, if solely that shown in LHCG minutes, is of limited value. It serves only to indicate total number of flights in a given quarter (recognised to be of importance in terms of annual quota, but little meaning as far as noise is concerned) .
18. The grouping of movements in the 0801 - 1800 time slot distorts the picture. When presented graphically, the scale on the horizontal axis is uneven and leads to the impression that flights outside the central period are minimal and hence irrelevant. In fact, the reverse is true and the early morning and late evening flights can be the worst in terms of noise disturbance.
19. When considering the impact of noise, one has to delve deeper than total numbers. The concentration or clustering of movements is all important and the data as presented offers no clues as to what is happening.
20. The Heliport clearly has this data - it is supplied, in part, to the CAA and shown on their website, although still not in a format that is entirely helpful.
21. To enable proper consideration of the noise impact of movements on local residents we need data showing:

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- a. figures for movements each day at 30 minute intervals (as shown by CAA), split according to helicopter type and user e.g. police, HEMS, commercial, sightseeing
- b. daily figures are important to enable differentiation between weekdays and weekends
- c. in the interests of transparency, the data should be accessible to residents via the LHCG minutes.

Noise Measurement

22. While the flight movement data will indicate when noise is likely to be an issue, it really has to be linked to noise measurements at the receiving end.
23. It is therefore disappointing to see (from LHCG minutes) that noise measurement has been under discussion now for more than 2 years and still no firm plans for implementation. Given the LHCG's terms of reference, this should have received much higher priority. With the offer from South Bank University to undertake the survey and perform the analysis it is difficult to understand why this has been delayed.
24. The recommendations in the London Assembly report included the following: *'investigate and establish a mechanism to ensure that research on noise and other data on all helicopter movements is effectively collected, collated and analysed and published'*. Although the Assembly was looking to the Department of Transport and CAA for implementation, it is sad to note that, for the last two years, LHCG appears to have had the opportunity to give this a useful nudge forward and has failed to do so.
25. As final points in this section:
 - a. it is our understanding that the planned locations for noise measurement did not include anywhere in Imperial Wharf. Given the position immediately opposite the Heliport and close proximity to flight paths we regard this as essential.
 - b. it will certainly be possible to site a measurement device on Riverside Tower and RTRA will be pleased to assist in identifying somewhere suitable.
 - c. amongst other things, the measurement of noise on Riverside Tower will support or kill the myth that noise levels are amplified by the buildings surrounding the heliport (see Para 2).
 - d. it is recognised that measurement will also yield information regarding helicopter types or piloting which lead to excessive noise levels.

London Assembly Report

26. "London in a spin" concluded with 14 recommendations. One of these was the formation of LHCG, which clearly came to pass. While some of the other recommendations appear to have been take forward, there are others seemingly buried.
27. It would be good if LHCG could be instrumental in reviving interest in the report's recommendations. Lack of information suggests it may now be gathering dust somewhere in a London Assembly filing cabinet.

Late evening helicopter flight

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28. A flight which we in Imperial Wharf find very disturbing is one that seems to arrive regularly between 22.00 and 22.30, usually closer to the latter. It is normally on the Helipad for 5 minutes or so with rotors running before taking off again.
29. In terms of noise generated, this helicopter seems to be at the upper end of the noise scale. Relatively low ambient noise levels late in the evening make the noise from this flight even more intrusive.
30. The interesting point is that this regular arrival and departure does not stand out clearly in the Heliport movements data. Can the Heliport throw any light on this? Is it really necessary for this helicopter to visit at this hour almost every evening and can an alternative flight pattern be considered?

Registration of complaints

31. When preparing this note, we checked the Wandsworth and Heliport websites for ways in which to register complaints. As far as we can see, it is far from clear how to proceed and it would be helpful if both websites could offer clear and simple guidance. LHCG might then receive more input from local residents.
32. Speaking for RTRA, there have been very few occasions when we have had cause to complain about the Heliport and pilots not following agreed procedures. The most common one would be too long on the ground with rotors running and we note that the resident in Altura Tower has been communicating with the Committee regarding this.

Yours sincerely

James Hawken

Hon Treasurer, Riverside Tower Residents' Association, Imperial Wharf

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LONDON HELIPORT CONSULTATIVE GROUP: WAY FORWARD

1. This paper argues that neither the regulatory framework governing helicopter movements over London nor the local consultation arrangements have kept pace with the increase in helicopter movements over residents' homes in recent years. There is increasing public disturbance and no obvious channel for the public to make their concerns heard. The paper proposes

- submissions to the Department of Transport and the Civil Aviation Authority about the regulatory framework; and
- changes to the constitution of the London Heliport Consultative Group to enable it to carry out its role effectively

Regulation Governing Helicopter Movements Over London

2. Helicopter movements are lightly regulated compared with aircraft movements. This is no doubt a legacy from the days when private, commercial helicopter flights were much rarer than they are now. However, over recent years the annual volume of such flights connected with Battersea Heliport has increased leading to greater resident disturbance, but no public recourse to information, complaints and or operational action.

3. Helicopter routes do not constitute official flight paths in the way aircraft routes do. However, parts of the three boroughs (Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea and Wandsworth) are sandwiched between no-fly zones relating to Heathrow to the west and restricted flying zones for Hyde Park and the City of London to the east. In practice, this concentrates flight routes to and from Battersea Heliport in a corridor directly over the homes of thousands of residents. However, the regulatory regime does not require these routes to be published nor does it allow for public consultation in matters such as alternation, concentration or dispersal within these routes: instead matters are left to the discretion of the pilot and NATS. It is our submission that the establishment of *de facto* flightpaths without sufficient checks and balances is unsatisfactory and has not kept pace with events.

4. These *de facto* helicopter flight paths have become established over several years during which volumes of movements have increased. One factor in this increase has been the rise of twin-engined helicopters which are not obliged to follow the river. Another factor has been increasing numbers of people and organisations prepared to pay the sums involved in hiring a helicopter to enable them to avoid London traffic and public transport and fly over the city. Unofficially, then, flight paths have become established in a corridor of air space, much of it over densely populated parts of London.

5. It is difficult for the public to ascertain what flights should and do take place. Unlike the major airports which publish copious information about flights, including in real time, Battersea Heliport publishes little information, instead communicating very limited information in arrears to this Group. In addition, the public tend to be confused about the source of much of the helicopter noise they experience, for example, appearing to attribute more of it to police helicopters than is the case.

6. An example of key information not readily available to the public is that for three specific days during the summer months (as well as additional five days, on alternate years, when

the Farnborough Air Show trade fair is on) there are no restrictions on volumes of helicopter flights to cater for visitors to high profile sports events, including the British F1 Grand Prix and Royal Ascot.

7. Helicopters create noise disturbance since they fly at low levels and have noisy engines but there is no public information about this noise. The Heliport does not publish details of the noise contours created by helicopters.

8. This dearth of information makes it difficult for the public to complain about disturbance from helicopters. That the Heliport has not received a high volume of complaints is not therefore surprising. However, the local authorities affected, which have no power in the matter, consistently receive complaints. (Annex 1 - to follow – will give an illustration of the kinds of informal complaints received in Hammersmith & Fulham by way of illustration).

9. We propose that this Consultative Group should institute work on a set of proposals to propose to policy makers at national level to bring the helicopter flight regime more into line with that governing aircraft to reflect their increasing use.

Effectiveness of the London Heliport Consultative Group

10. The establishment of the London Heliport Consultative Group in 2006 was a useful first step in setting up a dialogue between itself and affected residents. The constitution of the group states that it should “act as an effective means of consultation in relation to the London Heliport ...”. Amongst other things it has surfaced information which was not readily accessible about how the Heliport operates. It is also about to support a noise measurement exercise.

11. However, as presently constituted, it does not have the capacity to undertake the work now proposed preparing the submission to government proposed above or of, in the meantime, developing a more comprehensive information reporting requirement. Half yearly meetings with an annual change of chair do not create sufficient momentum for substantive work to be carried out. This is evidenced by the trend of very short meetings and minimal information from the Heliport.

12. Quality of life issues are likely to be increasingly important to the residents of the three constituent boroughs. A resource available to all is a peaceful environment but incursions are being made on this leaving local people powerless to prevent this, Councils may find increased public interest in the issue of helicopter movements if they give more publicity to the work of the group, while making it clear that powers currently lie elsewhere. Re-invigorating the Consultative Group will be a clear demonstration of that people's quality of life is important to local Councils.

13. More information is essential for more effective work to be carried out. A new reporting system from the Heliport to the Committee could include information such as

- times of all flight movements during the day
- purpose of each flight, distinguishing commercial flights for private individuals or companies
- visual representation of actual routes taken per flight
- destinations and origins of flights
- times of day when no flights are allowed
- sound maps or contours

14. We propose that the Group should work with the Heliport to develop a more comprehensive set of reporting information to the Group, including helicopter movements and noise contours.

15. We further propose that the Heliport should develop ways of communicating this information to the public, including material which can be linked to the borough websites and an explanation of the procedure for complaining.

Councillor Larry Culhane
LB Hammersmith and Fulham

Christina Smyth
Resident representative LB Hammersmith and Fulham

12th November 2015

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